

Goal!

Actua Soccer – in a league of its own!

issue four feb '96

£2.95

PLAY



the 100% Unofficial **PLAYSTATION** Magazine

Resident Evil

Gory gameplay from
beyond the
grave!

Flights of fantasy...

Magic Carpet

PlayStation
Exclusive!

Bullfrog's award winning
game spells success on the
PlayStation

Lone Soldier Guide

Free:

Primal Rage
pull out moves chart!

Import-tastic

Ridge Racer
Revolution
& Criticom
Reviewed!

Plus!

Johnny Bazookatone
Rise of the Robots 2
Wing Commander III
Alone In The Dark
Primal Rage
Krazy Ivan
Descent






PC
CD
ROM



"Make no mistake, every new Sony owner should instantly purchase this classic game."

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Cover Feature

Magic Carpet

24 Hovering in through the office window this month comes a fantastic thrill a minute voyage of a lifetime through the fantasy world of the multiple industry-award winning PC game, *Magic Carpet*. Utilising a truly amazing 3D

engine – y'know, the sort that is usually wasted on a flight sim, one of the year's most exciting releases touches down for the WorkStation treatment.



PlayStation Wired

06 This month in Wired, we look ahead to 1996 and the tasteful treats coming to a PlayStation near you. Who's releasing what, the rumours, the facts, and all the hottest news stories first and foremost.

INSIDE PLAY

the 100% Unofficial PL

Station Master

78 Our tactical cheats conductor pulls into the Station once again to give unbeatable gaming advice on the hottest new PlayStation releases.

Also, don't miss our stunning in-depth guides on:

Lone Soldier82
Rayman86



Wall of Games

49 This month we go back in time to bust open perhaps the most fun-filled beat-'em-up to emerge in recent years, *Primal Rage*. Human gobbling, Raptor devouring, it's all on the wall.



PLAYSTATION Magazine

Play in Wonderland

74 Read what happened when the Play boyz were let loose in Namco's first UK amusement centre, the Wonderpark. We gawped at and played (for free!) the hottest new releases to hit these shores, plus a look ahead to which ones will be appearing on the PlayStation.



Subscriptions

73 In these cold winter months, get Play delivered directly to your home at 25% cheaper than it would cost to brave the cold.

Arena

90 Our letters section is now in full swing with especially strong opinions on stereo sound (!) and the age old import Vs. PAL debate. Thank you once again for all your correspondence, and we're sorry if lack of space stops your letter from appearing. We have tried, it's now four pages for gawd's sake!

However, help may be on the way (partially) in that we're looking to be able to print ALL your letters very soon on our re-designed Web site, up and running in the near future...

Play Back

94 What's hot and what's not in our invaluable PlayStation buyers' guide. How will your favourite game be affected by the new blood this month?

In the curry house with...

96 PWEI, the alternative band who utilised their talents to produce the stunning soundtrack to *Loaded*. What a right old laff we had!

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Happy 199PSX! And what a great issue to start the year with – *Magic Carpet* exclusive, *Ridge Racer Revolution* reviewed, *Lone Soldier* blown to bits! If it's on the PlayStation, then it'll be on our pages. That's *Play's* new year resolution to you.

Well, predictably Sony won the Christmas console war, and as the PlayStation continues to flourish over the next few months, even in the face of tough opposition from those boyz at Nintendo, you can be sure that the quality of your gaming will rise with it. Just take a look at some of the titles available over the next 90+ pages! And, as the standard of PlayStation gaming continues to rocket, so will the quality of your favourite magazine.

That's why after this issue I will be moving back into my managerial role, so I can concentrate on developing and promoting future issues, and handing over the editorship of *Play* to my good friend and loyal gaming pal, Nick Roberts. It is a tribute to the power of PlayStation that a former Sega editor has turned his back on all the S.A.P.S who vainly cling to the unfulfilled promises of their virtual consoles, in order to become a part of the planet's fastest growing games phenomenon. Together, with Ian, Ryan and new team member Steve, we'll ensure that *Play* continues to go from strength to strength over the new year and beyond.

So, for the last time in this column, I congratulate you on choosing the most powerful games magazine on Earth, and to you and your console...ENJOY!

Dave Perry
Managing Editor



PLAYSTATION WIR Sony set packed sta 1991

▼ *Magic Carpet* and *Actua Soccer*, just two of the top PlayStation titles heading your way in 1996.



The PlayStation's roaring Christmas success means that there are now close to 150,000 PlayStation-owners in the UK alone as we move into what is already being called 199PSIX – making it by far England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland's most popular next generation console.

It's just as well really, or you'd be missing out on a potentially storming line up of 1996 releases. Although production difficulties still mean that, at time of writing, a lot of finished product is yet to be released (although there should've been a number of recent arrivals in the weeks before you read this), a massive number of games have already been completed and this is set to balloon even further over the next year. In its first four issues alone, *Play* has reviewed 70 titles, and whilst the overall standard

has been mixed to say the least, killer games such as *Tekken*, *Wipeout*, *Ridge Racer*, *Actua Soccer* (reviewed on page 32), *Striker '96*, *Destruction Derby* (I suppose), *Mortal Kombat 3*, *Doom*, *Lone Soldier*, *Rayman* and *Jumping Flash* mean that there are far more must-buys on PlayStation than certain other next generation machines. Having seen some of the games to come in the year ahead, it would seem PlayStation-owners are soon going to be spoilt for choice.

Play already knows of 207 projects in development, all planned for a 199PSIX release, and there's bound to be a few more we haven't managed to find about yet (there's only so many working hours in the day). Given the nature of the business, not all of these games will land on the shelves of your local video games centre over the next 12 months,

ATION ed s out 1 for PSix

we all know game designers are infamous for not getting work finished in the time they say they will, and some games will be scrapped altogether, but it still adds up to a cracking year ahead.

Here are some of the highlights we predict you'll be drooling over in the first six months of 1996PSIX. All release dates after February are provisional, and some of the February ones could still slip a month or so.

Now-ish

Actua Soccer, Gremlin Interactive
Brilliant, fantastic-looking football game
Firestorm: Thunderhawk 2, Core Design
Fast 'n' frantic helicopter shoot 'em-up
Lone Soldier, Telstar
Camouflage and gun-packed 3D shoot 'em up
Krazy Ivan, Sony, Interactive
3D shoot 'em-up with big robots and guns

Johnny Bazookatone, US Gold
Neat platformer with great tunes

February

Defcon 5, Sony Interactive
Atmospheric arcade strategy game
Primal Rage, Probe, Time Warner
Interactive Fun, dinosaur-based beat 'em-up
Total NBA '96, SCEE
Spectacular-looking basketball sim
Gex, BMGie
Decent platform game converted from 3DO
Tilt, Virgin
Brilliant-looking pinball game
Wing Commander III, Origin/EA
Star Wars-type interactive movie
Rise of the Robots 2, Mirage/Acclaim
Turkey turned chart topper?

March (hell of a month, this one)

Magic Carpet, Bullfrog/EA
Read this issue's WorkStation! (pp24-27)
Syndicate Wars, Bullfrog/EA
The thinking man's shoot 'em-up
Impact Racing, JVC/Virgin
Ridge Racer-clone with guns
Power Soccer, Sony Interactive
Football for those who play dirty
Descent, Interplay
3D shoot 'em-up with 360 degree movement
Fade To Black, EA
Delphine-designed action adventure game
Street Fighter Alpha, Capcom/Virgin
Carry on Street Fighter
Darkstalkers, Capcom/Virgin
Cool-looking cartoon beat 'em-up
Waterworld, Interplay
Lush-looking arcade shoot 'em-up
Criticom, Virgin
Decent beat 'em-up, looks a bit like Toshinden

April

Resident Evil, Capcom/Virgin
Awesome

Street Racer, Ubi Soft
Multi-player racer, could be special
Space Hulk, EA
3DO conversion, supposedly better than Doom
NHL '96, EA
Ice Hockey sim, might be good
NBA In The Zone, Konami
Very promising basketball sim
Witchwood, Team 17/Ocean
Zelda-type RPG
Spot Goes to Hollywood, Virgin
Nice looking platformer

May

Rock 'n' Roll Racing II, Interplay
Driving game with guns
Alien Trilogy
Doom-clone based on Alien films
Victory Boxing, JVC/Virgin
Good boxing game shock!
Ridge Racer Revolution, SCEE
PAL version. NTSC version reviewed on page 28
Olympic Sports 1&2, US Gold
Lots of Olympics-related antics
Earthworm Jim 2, Virgin
One of the best 16-bit games gets upgraded to PlayStation
Wing Commander IV, Origin/EA
Much the same as III, but better

June

X-Men, Acclaim
Cartoon beat 'em-up
Allegiance, Team 17/Ocean
Another thinking man's shoot 'em-up
Project Overkill, Konami
Gore-splattered mindless violence
Hexen, GT Interactive
By same guys who did Doom
Dungeon Keeper, Bullfrog/EA
RPG where you control the dungeon!
Creation, Bullfrog/EA
Another cracker from the winning team

Rampant Virgin grabs another

Virgin, the firm which recently signed up hot Capcom trio, *Street Fighter Alpha*, *Resident Evil* and *Darkstalkers* as well as Vic Tokai's great new *Toshinden*-beater, *Criticom* (reviewed on page 58) has snapped up rights to release games from US games publisher Bethesda in the UK.

One of the most respected US development teams, Bethesda's line-up in the past includes *Terminator 2029* and *Elder Scrolls*, published in the UK by US Gold. The firm apparently recently decided that it needed a change in Europe, and split from US Gold to hook up with the currently rampant Virgin, who will now handle all of Bethesda's products throughout Europe (with the exception of France.)

Rumour has it that the first game to be released will be *Future Shock*, and with any luck it should be appearing on the Sony PlayStation sometime mid '96. Better make it a good one then.

Waterworld update

Interplay's licence of Kevin Costner's multi-million dollar flop *Waterworld*, being developed by Software Creations, is coming along nicely. Featured in issue two of *Play*, it is still on target to hit its March release date.

Work continues on the graphics and these hi-resolution stills from the animated sequences show that it should be a crackingly well presented game. The power of the PlayStation means that game designers can get closer and closer to reproducing some of the visual effects which make action movies so spectacular. Providing nothing goes wrong, we should be able to bring you a review in an issue or two's time.



Data sees blue skies ahead

Fans of sports games are in for a real treat over the next few years because Data East have formed an agreement with California based Blue Sky Software to produce 32-bit sports titles for the PlayStation. In the past, Blue Sky have been responsible for many top Sega Mega Drive titles including *World Series Baseball*, *College Football's National Championship* and *NFL Sports Talk Football '94* as well as non-sports games *Road Runner: Desert Demolition* and *Shadowrun*.

The deal will see the company putting their development time into creating baseball and football titles spread over the next few years. Mike Meyers, director of product development for Data East commented, "Words can't describe how excited we are to have this agreement with Blue Sky. They have a superlative track record in the sports genre as a creator of original designs that combine realism with exciting gameplay."

Get your sports shoes on — these games should be worth a kick about!



Core Open fore Scotland

The *Scottish Open* is a golf game that's being pitched as an arcade game rather than a simulation. It features four courses, including Carnoustie — home of the 1995 Scottish open — all fully texture mapped, with the option to flip them over to make eight. Up to four players can play at once, with five different styles of play, including Tournament, Derby Scramble and Shoot Out. Core Design's new schwinger is set for a February release.



◀ Core Design have been finely tuning the game engine for their golf sim for months now.

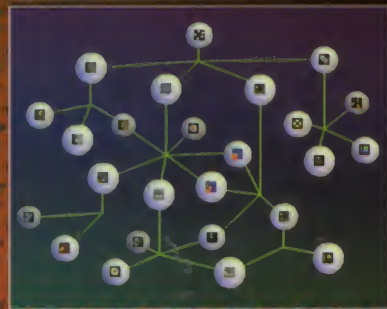


▶ They may be going for a more arcade feel with this game, but they've still got a huge power marker on the screen!



We hate the French!

This is the best excuse we've ever heard for something not turning up. *Street Racer*-developers Vivid Image are claiming that because of all the industrial action going on in France at the moment, they've been unable to complete the screenshots they were going to give us for part two of the special WorkStation feature we'd lined up. Something about working in tandem with the French offices of publisher Ubi Soft and not being able to modem the pics back and forth. Anyway, Vivid have apologised and promise, stropky French workers permitting, they'll get the shots to us in time for the next issue.



Space closes in.
Dark corridors surround you.
Your home is very far away.

And someone somewhere wants you dead.

This is gameplay beyond your wildest nightmares.
This is the most absorbing strategic thriller of them all.
This is Defcon 5, and now it's available for your PlayStation.

Chilling 3D graphics and a nerve-jangling soundtrack combine in this off-world
hell-hole where survival depends on your wits, your logic and your burning desire to live!
And when an entire alien attack fleet has you in its sights, you might just end up wondering
where your next breath is coming from.

The NHP 66 mining colony is your workplace, your home, your world.
It could soon become your coffin.

Defcon 5.
Peace has a price and you're about to pay it.



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Paint the town...green?!

Those lovely Lemmings are up to their old tricks again with a new game on the cards from the software company that's had more names than Asam, Psygnosis. They're considering producing a Lemmings paintball game for the PlayStation complete with Silicon Graphics rendered visuals and all the spit and polish they have become so famous for.

There are no screenshots to show of as yet, in fact they've still got to convince their big bosses Sony that the game is a good idea, but we all love *Lemmings* don't we? If you'd like to see a Lemmings paintball extravaganza on your console, write to Sony and tell them so! Oh, and tell 'em Play sent ya!



KV Kicked off

It is with great regret that Play announces that this will be Asam KV Caveman Ahmad's last issue as one of the Play boyz. Due to the new ruling that no team member shall have more than two names, our favourite schizophrenic has been forced to leave the golden beaches of Play for the murky waters of sister magazine, X•Gen. KV fans (both of you) can follow his own 'large' writing style in issue seven of the multi-format magazine, on sale the first week in February. He will be sorely missed, probably.

Magical Mystery Tour

Sony Interactive Studios have been busy over the last few months, creating graphics and finely tuning the gameplay for their new interactive adventure on the PlayStation. *Sentient* is full of mysteries to be solved and clues to find.

There's a sun, a space station, a plague, a photograph, a crash-landing, a case of mistaken identity, a murder, a resurrection, a haunting dream, another murder, a mask, a race against time and a handful of terrible truths. Not bad for starters!

With drop dead gorgeous computer generated images and plenty of twists and turns this should indeed turn a few heads when released in Europe in the first quarter of 1996.



Spawn's spawned a game!

From comic book to video game, the super heroes of the world seem to be making the transformation with ease these days. The latest cult figure to be snapped up is *Spawn*, a character created by Todd McFarlane. Acclaim are the video game giants with the big cheque book, and they are busy creating the 16-bit version of the game as I type.

It's rumoured that a 32-bit game shouldn't be far behind and a licence like is far too good an opportunity to pass up on the PlayStation. The game incorporates all the raging combat and unholy powers of the comic books with the Lord of Darkness himself, Malebolgia, making an appearance as an end of level guardian along with the powers of darkness Violator, Overkill, Anti-Spawn, New Breed and the Mad One! Special weapons like the Burning Fist, Fire Storm and invulnerability will be up for grabs along with plenty of cool artwork from the comics and some top animation.

As soon as we get confirmation on a PlayStation version, you'll be the first to know, well, after us of course!



IF YOU WANT MORE VIOLENCE ON T.V.

LONE SOLDIER



STICK THIS GRENADE IN YOUR "PLAYSTATION"!



"...blows the roof off the 'Doom' genre"

Rated: 92%

PLAY 

"Pure arcade frenzy over a massive variety of levels, combining pumping 3D action and awesome firepower. This is exactly what we want."


GamePro

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AVAILABLE
NOW!



Konami goes for its guns!

After a relatively slow emergence into the PlayStation scene, Konami have now pulled out all the stops to produce a promising influx of games into the PlayStation market for the new year.

Headlining their impressive barrage of titles is none other than the long-awaited futuristic shoot 'em-up, *Project Overkill*. After slipping considerably from its originally scheduled release date, *Project Overkill* now looks set to appear officially in June – two months after the planned US release. The game supplies frantic blasting action and copious amounts of gore in equal measures, and should appeal to the gore-loving contingent of PlayStation owners.



Yankee double dandy!

Also on the cards from Konami are two first-rate American sports sims, *NFL Full Contact* and *MLBPA: Bottom of the 9th*. The latter is the much-anticipated motion-captured baseball game that has been in development for some considerable time now. *NFL Full Contact* is a gridiron game that casts a whole new perspective over the proceedings. You actually play the action and call the shots right down on the field amongst a huddle of sweaty, aggressive players – which makes a change from the age-old *Madden* perspective. Although a spokesperson at Konami UK stated that an official release for both titles is looking highly unlikely, they will be available on US import within the next month (so look out for full reviews next issue).



Let it bleed!

Rounding up Konami's software assault is *Castlevania: The Bloodletting* – which is an evolved continuation of Konami's hugely popular vampire platform saga. Following the same story lines as before (i.e. whip-lashing hunk wreaks havoc in ghoul land to save sweet little damsel from the vile clutches of Dracula), *Castlevania: The Bloodletting* is promised to contain plenty of PlayStation effects to give the somewhat dated theme a more modern feel, and it should be available to buy at the end of the year.

Horny crypt invaders!

Speculation time now, and this month our investigators are hot on the trail of *Crypt Killer*, Konami's brilliant new arcade release. Voted best gun game by the distributors and operators at this year's US arcade show, AMOA – it's plain to see where all the excitement is coming from. *Crypt Killer* features unbelievable graphics and is the first coin-op to feature a fully reloadable pump action shot gun that isn't in some way attached to the cabinet. There's just one downer though... *Crypt Killer* hasn't been confirmed for a PlayStation release as yet – doh!

However, Konami have just developed the official PlayStation light gun which is planned to be released simultaneously with Sony Interactive's *Horned Owl* shooting game later this year. So we reckon the possibility of *Crypt Killer* making an appearance on the PlayStation is looking highly likely, although probably not until Christmas at the earliest.



Psygnosis puts Arthur to the sword

If the film *First Knight* wasn't enough, Psygnosis have brought out their own interactive version of the Arthurian legend. *Chronicles of the Sword* takes you into the depths of swashbuckling action combined with a bit of magic and mystery. Best described as a cinematic 3D adventure, it boasts a 'movie-quality' storyline and utilises a combination of first and third person perspectives in fully rendered 3D worlds.

The game is also claimed to have multi-layered gameplay in the form of many plots and sub-plots to work through. *Chronicles of the Sword*, is due for release around March.



Vic's virus creeps into view

There's a little alien in all of us – is the cry from Vic Tokai with the imminent release of new PlayStation title, *Alien Virus*. The story goes like this... on returning to the space station after a month in hyper space things weren't quite as you expected. There was no-one to be seen and not a single sound except for the hangar door locking and the spit of loose cables somewhere. With nothing but a clapped out robot for company you soon discover that the place has been overrun with aliens. Now you have to find them, before they find you!

With a first person, ray-traced rendered look, multi-sequenced animation, over one hour of sampled speech and a varied, gory gameplay with plenty of death sequences, it certainly sounds promising. It'll hit the shops over the next couple of months, and you can bet that *Play* will give you a full run-down before then!



Dragons Ablaze PlayStation

Blazing *Dragons*, created by Terry Jones (of *Monty Python* and *The Life of Brian* fame), is the second game this month about King Arthur. BMGie's rendition however, take the classic tale of the Knights of the Round Table and turns it upside-down in this comic interactive cartoon adventure.

With 'crazy-wacky-zany-bonkers' visuals and sound effects, this game sounds like something from the deepest, darkest corners of Terry Jones' incredibly funny mind. *Blazing Dragons* should be out sometime in February.

Sowing the seeds

Brown, knobby creatures with drooling mouths and razor sharp teeth. No, we're not talking about Saturn owners, we're talking H.R. Giger here, and his alien creation. The guy behind all the gruesome creatures in the *Alien* movie series is also behind all the visuals in the new PlayStation game, *Dark Seed*.

Having already done the rounds of console world on various formats, it now looks like it's the PlayStation's turn. The game basically boils down to a point and click style adventure with plenty of creepy rooms to roam around and nasty surprises that'll soon have you diving for the pillow.

Already doing the preview tour in Japan, it should be over on these shores very soon. Look out for a *Play Wired Up* feature in a future issue.



I've got a nasty rash!

Still no sign of Electronic Arts' classic *Road Rash* in a previewable form, all we've received are these new screen shots of the game – and it's looking mighty fine too!

The PlayStation version is loosely based on the 3DO manifestation of the game. The basic game engine is a fast, 3D affair with buildings and cars whizzing by, plenty of tough challengers to race against and police cars to stop and fine you if you're caught racing too fast. You can of course still run over the old ladies that cross the road, and be sent flying if you hit a fire hydrant or annoying tree on the pavement.

This racing classic will be winging its way to our work station doors very soon. In the meantime – here are a few extra screen shots to drool over.



Watching the detectives...

Another crackin' new PlayStation release from Electronic Arts, *Psychic Detective* is a game with five hours of FMV to show off and piles of really perplexing puzzles. All the video footage has been directed by an Emmy award-winning director so no expense has been spared in bringing the strange world of Eric's mind to your next console.

Set inside the head of a guy called Eric, you've got to use all his psychic powers to detect the perpetrator of a grisly murder. Mad, bad and probably occasionally sad, we'll tell you more on this freaky CD next issue.



Get a load off PLAY!

Hoorah!

The number one 100% unofficial PlayStation magazine has yet another massive compo specially for our readers. Thanks to those lovely people at Gremlin Interactive, we're giving away a spanking new Sony 16" wide-screen Trinitron TV and a copy of the awesome *Loaded* to our first prize winner, PLUS a copy of the game to FOUR runners up. Aren't we great? Say 'yes'.

To win, just answer this incredibly easy-peasy question...

Which band (featured elsewhere in the mag) provided the additional music for *Loaded*?

- A The Wurzels
- B Pop Will Eat Itself
- C Bananarama



Please note: The editor's decision is final. Employees of Paragon Publishing, its suppliers or Gremlin Interactive may not enter and will have FUB to answer to if they try. The closing date for the competition is Friday 16th February 1996, so get your entries in quicksmart. All winners will be notified in writing. A list of winners will be available in writing on request from Paragon Publishing at the above address.

First Prize

A Sony 16" wide-screen TV specially designed for the PlayStation and a copy of *Loaded*

Simply write your answer on the back of a postcard or a stuck-down envelope, together with your name and address, and send it to:

Get me Loaded!
Play Magazine, Paragon Publishing
Paragon House, St Peter's Road
Bournemouth BH1 2JS

Runners Up

4 *Loaded* packs including the game and posters

A little 16" screen may seem small, but this little baby is BIG in action. You can watch all those lovely movies in cinemascope, and play games on it using its special 'Game Mode'. All that and remote control, teletext, and full-range stereophonic sound, this baby is the business! I want one!

Sponsored by





Striker

**The brilliance of football. Just imagine it
24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.**

Football, football, football. Women are right, men have only got one thing on their mind. But then nothing else is likely to get a look in with Striker '96. (Awarded 93% and called "Addictive, enjoyable, orgasmic fun" by Gamepro. While Dave Perry of Gamemaster TV said: "Striker '96, PlayStation soccer game of the year. Official!") It captures all the thrills and excitement of football and is even more absorbing than the game itself, with ultra smooth panning angles, perfectly animated players and unbelievably fast 3-D graphics. It's definitely a black armband day. "Too right, Arsenal have lost again"



BUY

SELL

EXCHANGE

Here's TOBY

OH BOY OH BOY OH BOY! I CAN'T WAIT TO TRY OUT MY NEW SONY PLAYSTATION!

AAGH!

I JUST BOUGHT IT FROM THE BEST GAMES SHOP IN THE KNOWN UNIVERSE - THE COMPUTER EXCHANGE! YEE-HAW!

BUT... SORRY TOBY YOUR LITTLE BROTHER'S WATCHING HIS FAVOURITE PROGRAMME. YOU'LL HAVE TO WAIT.

THE BINKY FLUFFIN' SHOW

HALF AN HOUR LATER...

THEN BINKY HAD AN IDEA. "C'MON GANG," HE SAID, "LET'S METHODICALLY COUNT ALL THE DAISIES IN THE MEADOW, ONE BY ONE!" AND SO THEY ALL BEGAN TO COUNT...

TWO HOURS LATER...

"THERE'S ANOTHER ONE!" SAID HENRY HEDGEHOG. "SO THAT MAKES IT SIX THOUSAND, FOUR HUNDRED AND NINETY TWO," SAID BINKY. "BUT THERE'S STILL MORE TO GO"

TWELVE WEEKS LATER...

"I DO BELIEVE WE'VE LOST COUNT", SIGHED BINKY. "WE'D BETTER START ALL OVER AGAIN"

NAAAAARRRGHH!

OH GOD. NOW I'VE BROKEN THE TV. I WONDER IF THAT OLD BIDDY NEXT DOOR'LL LET ME USE HERS?

USE ME TELEVISION! OF COURSE YOU CAN, SONNY!

COR, THANKS!

YOU DON'T MIND IF I FINISH WATCHING MY SOAP OPERA FIRST, DO YOU?

HEY BRAD - WHAT'RE YOU DOING?

MEMORISING THE PHONE BOOK. FRANK GIVING ME A HAND?

IF YOU WEREN'T SO WIZENED AND SAGGY-LOOKING I'D DAMN WELL KISS YOU!

WHY NO, NOT AT ALL...

NO WORRIES, MATE...

THREE CENTURIES LATER...

OKAY, WHERE ARE WE UP TO?

SMITH, R. A.

OKAY, NEXT...

FORTY NINE MILLION LATER...

I WAIT A MINUTE - THIS IS LAST YEAR'S PHONE BOOK!

I'LL HAVE TO START AGAIN



AND... HEY! PRISON AIN'T SO BAD! I'VE GOT MY PLAYSTATION, AND I CAN GET ALL THE GAMES I WANT FROM THE COMPUTER EXCHANGE ORDERING SERVICE - AND THEY LET ME PART EXCHANGE!

THE COMMUNAL SHOWERS AREN'T QUITE AS MUCH FUN, BUT WE WON'T GO INTO THAT RIGHT NOW.



Destruction Derby



Mortal Kombat 3



Motor Toon GP



Tekken



Warhawk



Loaded

Retail Outlets

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(just off Oxford St)
London W1P 1AD
(0171) 636 2666

282 Station Rd
Harrow
Middx HA1 2EA
(0181) 427 5800

Mail Order Dept

32 Rathbone Place
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just ask for "Mail Order"



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PLAY Games

Well here we go again, straight into the heart of the matter. Calls made, CDs in, hatchets out, it's time to take in the games. What's going to be spinning on your PlayStation in '96 then?

Wired Up

Issue four of *Play* already, and here is the second Wired Up section, featuring the early looks at top games which you all requested in the reader's surveys. This time around we've decided to throw some background info your way on three promising Springtime releases.

This month we're getting closer to:

Wing Commander III	18
Descent	20
Actua Golf	22

Work Stations

More in-depth features where we chat to the developers and get their ideas on what's gone into some of the best looking design projects in progress. Only the biggest up and coming releases get featured here. First screenshots, artworks and explanations ensure that you guys get all the gen on the next big thing(s) straight from the mouths that matter.

First dates this month are:

Magic Carpet	24
Resident Evil	34
VR Pool	54
Rise of the Robots 2	68

Evaluation Station

Hammer time. At last,

some of the teething troubles game

designers would seem to have had (That's the polite interpretation of 'crap product' anyway) look like they're coming to an end. The overall standard is definitely increasing, and, as ever, *Play* is on hand to dish out the bouquets and brickbats to let you know which games are the most deserving of your hard earned wads.

Each title we evaluate is given a totally honest and unbiased Played rating. 100% unofficial - 100% honest.

Guide to the Grades

In *Play*, games are rated on looks, sounds and also value for money. Any game priced at more than £40 had better make sure it delivers big-time or we'll want to know why not. The writer will also add an extra category, particular to that game. Some of these will be fun, some may give an important hint at a particular feature of the product itself.

All of these categories are marked out of ten and are followed by the Played score, which is judged entirely on how much fun the game is. This is rated out of 100, and breaks down like this:

94-100 These games are exceptional. They're fun, stay fun and are groundbreaking. They're also marked with a coveted Play PLUS logo. We've only had two to date, and if you've seen the high quality of most PlayStation games, you'll know how tough we are.

85-93 Games we recommend. And now we've altered the verdict box to illustrate our approval, as you'll see. These games are fun, lasting, decent value for money, but not necessarily hugely original.

80-84 Games that maybe one

member of the team would score at 85+, but the others don't really feel is worth splashing out over £40 on. Not so many this issue as last, thank god. Ryan didn't speak to me for days after that argument over *FIFA '96*.

70-79 Games that are entertaining, but we don't think have lasting appeal OR games that are above average but slightly flawed.

65-70 Average games which may appeal to fans of the genre but should probably be avoided by everyone else.

0-64 Not good enough.

Going all the way with Play are:

Ridge Racer	
Revolution	28
Actua Soccer	32
Krazy Ivan	38
Johnny Bazookatone	42
Alone In The Dark	44
Primal Rage	46
Operation Jumpgate	48
Agile Warrior	53
Criticom	58
Cyberia	60
NFL Game Day	62
Namco Museum Vol 1	64
NHL Faceoff	72
In the Hunt	72



3

3 This is Mark Hamill looking dead moody!
4 This is Mark not being able to believe his luck!
5 Once in the control room, you control your destiny.



4



5

Talk to HOBBS.

Star Wars

PLAY information

- Name: Wing Commander III
- Publisher: Electronic Arts
- Where at: 75%
- Target release: 23rd February

EA's flagship game of last year is a typical result of what happens when two of the biggest entertainment mediums fuse together to form one formidable force. *Wing Commander III* combines your average space shoot 'em up with all the razzmatazz usually associated with Hollywood to form... well, an interactive movie to end all others.

By enlisting a whole host of stars into the mix, EA have added credibility and depth to a genre that could have quite easily ran out of rocket boosters and drifted silently off into the colossal void. This game redefines the term 'atmospheric' and basically plotted the astrological chart for other games to follow... and it's timely arrival is now

imminent on PlayStation! Already a phenomenal

success on the 3DO and PC CD-ROM, *Wing Commander III* uses snippets of FMV footage to depict the intergalactic tale of a war raging between humans and cat-like creatures called Kilrathis – although they possess all the sinister menace of Bungle from *Rainbow* on a bad-hair day.

You come into the picture in the dashing form of Mark Hamill (aka Luke Skywalker from *Star Wars*) when the Kilrathis snatch your girlfriend. However, it just so happens that you're an ace pilot and more than equal to the task of getting her back and winning the day in time for tea and crumpet(s)!

An Equitable life

Of course, Mark isn't the only star to lend his services to the project. Also appearing in cameo form is Malcolm MacDowell, Ginger Lynn Allen (phroor!), and John Rhys Davies – you know that dumpy bearded bloke who shouts "Indy" a lot in *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.

You can interact with all of these personalities as the story unfolds, but the thick of the action is carried out in the confines of your starship as you fly a series of hugely demanding missions for your cause. This element of the game is

it's

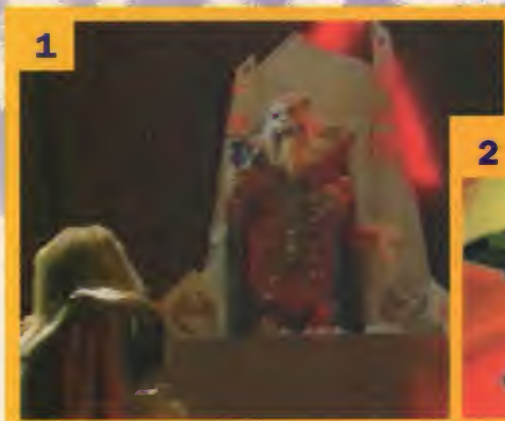
your usual 3D flying affair – become engaged in dog-fights, obliterate star destroyers and then master complex docking procedures. There's certainly a lot to take in, and those who have already become engrossed in the gripping saga will tell you that games like this don't come along very often.

As far as production values and graphics go on the PlayStation, *Wing Commander III* is pretty much in a class of its own. It makes mincemeat of EA's other contender, *Shock Wave Assault*, and let's face it, *Total Eclipse Turbo* and *Starblade* hardly induce tidal waves of sweat in anticipation. However, will arriving on the back of the 3DO and CD ROM versions – which have been out a while, hinder the games chances of being catapulted straight to A-class status? Maybe, maybe not, we'll decide for ourselves next month when we beam down the full review. Provided it doesn't get held up, of course.



1 Believe it or not, these furry, cute-looking cats are the baddies in the game.

2 The full motion video intro sequences really ooze atmosphere.



1



2

6



6 Pick your target and let rip, just make sure it isn't one of your own crafts first!

7 Engaging in complex docking procedures are a necessity I'm afraid.

7



8

8 With the enemy in your sights, use the force Luke... er, I mean Blair. Oh damn!

9 With one last parting cry, an enemy vessels explodes into a smouldering fireball.

9



Call my agent

A new trend has begun, and as a result, software big-wigs are falling over themselves trying to sign up Hollywood starlets to put in an appearance in their latest interactive movie. Think about it, we've had Dennis Hopper, Christopher Walken, Tia Carrere, Erika Eleniak, Yasmine Bleeth, Grace Jones, Stephanie Seymour and loads of others. Alright so some of the names dropped here may be more famous than others, but the fact remains... Cyber Hollywood has arrived!

Wing Commander III also features several renowned names from the biz, and so *Play* have brought you this special cut out and keep guide to who's who.



Mark Hamill

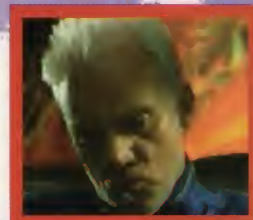
Mark tops the bill in the starring role as the stubbled, husky Colonel Blair – the player's alter ego. No stranger to Sci-fi antics, Mark is best remembered for his role of Luke Skywalker in the legendary *Star Wars* trilogy. However, perhaps only now remembered by the great man himself, fame came callin' for Mark long before the evil Empire decided to

take over the galaxy. Mention '*General Hospital*' to his face and Mark will probably go white as a sheet and ignore you – for it was in this tacky US soap opera that young Skywalker first tried his acting talents alongside the incredibly youthful and impressionable Tia Carrere. Schwing! Mark has also appeared in *SlipStream*, an episode of *SeaQuest DSV*, and will star in a remake of the chiller classic *Village of the Damned*, out next year.

Malcolm MacDowell

Stepping into the moody shoes of Commander Tolwyn is this talented thespian chappie who has literally an army of credits to his name. Malcolm's most recent roles have been in blockbuster movies such as *Star Trek: Generations* and *Tank Girl*, but his career spans way back to such films as *If*, *Cat People* and most notorious of all, *Clockwork Orange*.

Malcolm is now working on a real life version of the animated Manga classic, *Fist of the North Star*.



John Rhys Davis

Instantly recognisable for his tubby waistline, curly black locks and beard, John has had bit-parts in loads of films since his career started back in 1970. His first acting role was in an iffy Adam Faith series called *Budgie* – in which he played some goon called Laughing Spam Fritter, ahem! Thankfully, fate has been a lot kinder to John since, hence roles in popular

films such as *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *The Untouchables*, *The Living Daylights*, and *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*.

Ginger Lynn Allen

Wooer! Bark, down boy etc. Stepping into the oily overalls of Sally the flight mechanic is, Ginger Lynn Allen – who, for the slightly older, hairy-palmed contingent is perhaps best known for stepping OUT of her clothes. Yes, our Ginger was in fact a hard-core porn star in films such as *New Wave Hookers* and *Blame it on Ginger* alongside super stud, Randy Spears... but we've never actually seen any of these, errmm, films, cough!

However, in recent years, Ginger has made a name for herself in more mainstream films such as *Young Guns II* and *Bound and Gagged: A Love Story*. Which isn't a porn film, honest.



You're going down

PLAY+ information

● Name: Descent
● Publisher: Interplay
● Where at: 85%
● Target release: March

1 This boy in blue is seeking your help, so fly over and save his butt!
2 Go through these doors and you'll be shocked with what's behind them!

Let's not make too many references to *Doom* here – *Descent* is a stand alone original game that contains many original features. *Descent* takes the perspective and all out shooting action of *Doom*, but adds a kind of spaceship that the player operates, armed to the hilt with weapons. A neat introduction, which shows two chaps having a conversation on board a seemingly massive

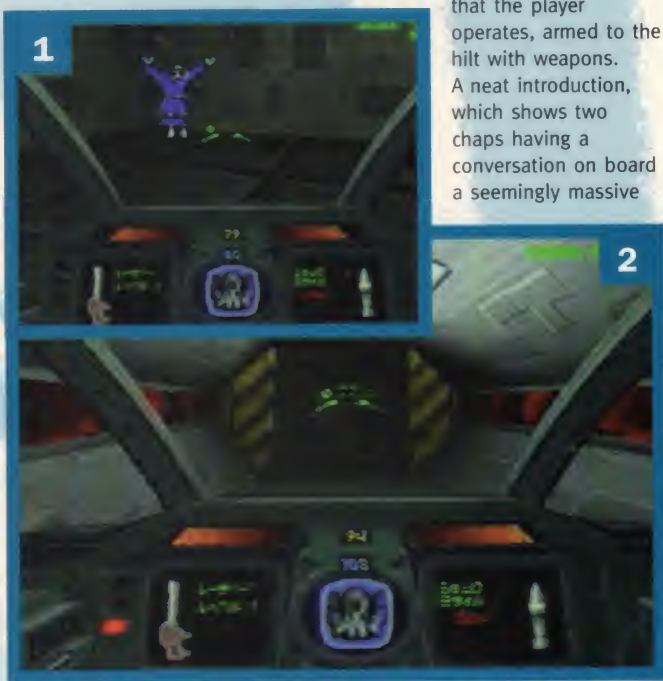
space station, reveals that a huge mining operation belonging to Mineral Corporation has been taken over by hordes of robots. This is where you come in! Armed with countless weapons and piloting the latest spaceship (conveniently big enough to fly down narrow tunnels), it's your job to infiltrate the mining station and destroy the marauding robots. As well as the robots which have to be destroyed, *Descent* features hostages to be rescued and weapons to collect, such as a Vulcan Cannon, heat-seeking missiles and spreadfire cannons. Your ship's weapons systems can be recharged by collecting energy boosts, and there is an energy zone which can be flown through to recharge your ship's lost power. Each level is full of locked doors which can only be opened with colour coded keys. These must be opened so that you can reach and destroy a fusion reactor. Once this has been destroyed, you get a limited time in which to escape from the mine station before it blows sky high. A good knowledge of the layout of the stage is essential here, as you get about 50 seconds to find the exit.

Level headed

On first impressions, the levels are looking quite complex with long, dark tunnels hiding all sorts of enemy robots.

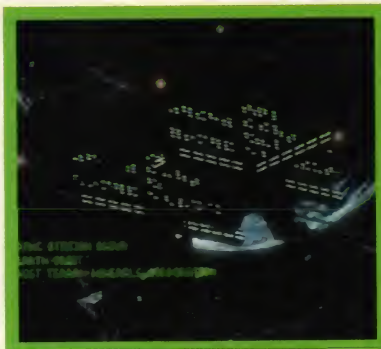
You never know what could be round the next corner, and it's this sort of feeling that *Descent* portrays that, if they get it right, could just give it the edge over certain other 3D shooting games. Thankfully, a map has been provided, which displays the areas that you have visited and it rotates in full 3D too. A bit pointless, some might say, but it seems to serve a valid purpose. From what we've seen of the levels, *Descent* has an atmosphere all of its own, which could be described as something out of the *Alien Trilogy* films. The graphics, although dark and "claustrophobic", are looking undeniably like a class act and everything moves smoothly. The intro, for what it's worth, is also a model class-looker, somewhat reminiscent of the graphics in *Cyberia*.

What will *Descent* sound like? Well, it will have full surround sound, and you'll be able to hear those robots before they even appear round a corner. Clever eh?



Brief Encounter

There's no better way to explain your mission than by showing it happen through a dark, atmospheric intro. Set on a huge space station, your superior explains to you just what is going on, while you sit back drinking a steaming mug of, er, coffee. This is typical of the style of introduction sequences that we've come to expect from the PlayStation. Here, you are shown the cockpit of your ship, and a monitor displays all the types of robots to be encountered. After that, begin your descent onto the planet. You're on your own now!



ate!

There will also be five difficulty levels, ranging from Trainee, Rookie and Insane, so it shouldn't be that easy to get through. What makes *Descent* stand out from other games of this genre is that it features full 360 degree rotational movement. In other words, you will have full control over your ship, and it can be flown at any angle. It can also be buzzed around upside down (though we're not quite sure why). The ship can be moved quickly or can sneak along. By pressing one of the buttons, it can side step and peer around corners, which greatly reduces the risk of getting shot.

Presently, *Descent* is looking promising and we've got no complaints at all. Even with some work to do, the controls are responsive and there's a genuine increase in

scarey tension the further you progress into the game. Those who like their games to be atmospheric and tough as well, would be well advised to start checking their bank accounts for a spare £40 as it has certainly made a favourable first impression here at *Play*.

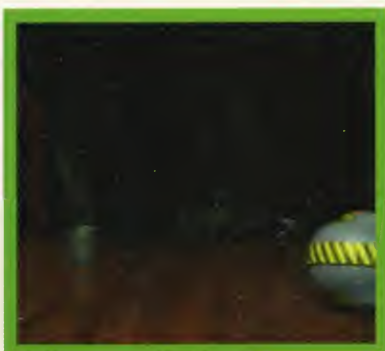
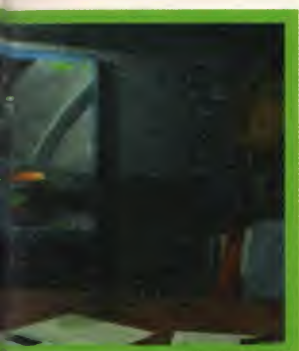


- 3 These robots will kill you if you don't blast them first!
- 4 You've shot an enemy and he's blown to bits, nice job!
- 5 More big bangs in *Descent* and the person behind this craft seems to be doing well
- 6 Famous last words eh? Your ship has sadly been shot down. Looks like you're gonna have to start again.
- 7 Quick, turn around and flee, that's your only chance.



scarey tension the further you progress into the game. Those who like their games to be atmospheric and tough as well, would be well advised to start checking their bank accounts for a spare £40 as it has certainly made a favourable first impression here at *Play*.

- 8 Don't just stare at the ground. There's lots to be found and things to shoot. It's your chance to be the ultimate warrior.
- 9 In this lava filled section of the level you're required to destroy everything and there's also some pick-ups on a ledge below!

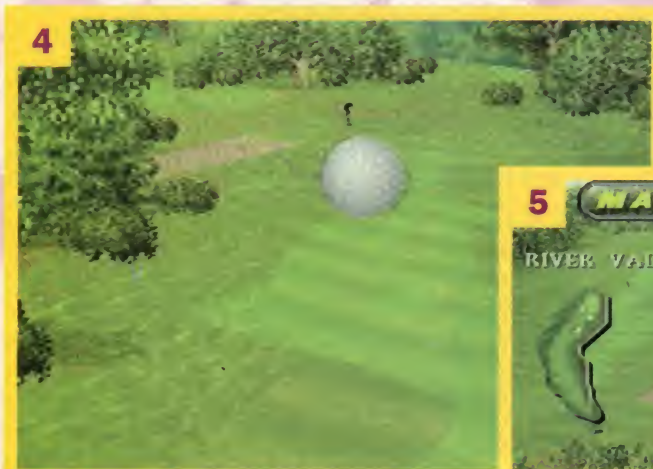




1 The path is set for a nifty little chip onto the green... keep it in the red and you'll be clear.
2 To get this one on target you'll have to curl it round the high branch and chip the bird's nest.



3 Don't always rely on the default clubs to get you to the green.
4 Crack! I do hope that helicopter cam is insured.
5 Onto the next hole and what taxing hazards await us?



the hole in my

PLAY information

● Name: Actua Golf
● Publisher: Gremlin Interactive
● Where at: 90% complete
● Target release: February

Golf. It's far too tempting to leave it at that really. Y'know, golf, gee that's exciting.

But to do so would be missing the point. It may not be the most instantly gratifying video game genre in the world, but it does make for a decent single or multi-player experience in a kind of post-club chill out sort of way. (If you'll excuse the pun). And good golf games are not only enjoyable, but have always sold well in the past whereas bad games really do stink. So there must be a way of sorting out the Faldos from the hackers.

To date, we have EA's splendid *PGA Tour '96* to play with, but there is room for improvement. Heading our way later this year is Gremlin's *Actua Golf*, the next in the firm's *Actua* series following on from the stunning *Actua Soccer* (cunningly previewed for you, later this issue). It looks like being more of a scratch player than a Sunday afternoon stroller.

The firm has again been beaver away in its £250,000 motion-capture studio to perfect the animation, and promises "real driving, real chipping and real putting."

Short of being on an actual golf course with an actual driver, wedge or putter in your hand, I suppose.

Candid camera

Featuring two specially designed courses (as opposed to the digital reworking of 'name' venues used in many games) *Actua Golf* is a braggart's delight.

See, once you've played your shot you can set up a camera angle from practically anywhere on the hole layout to track the ball's flight, and even set up three cameras at once to watch multi-view replays. The same process is utilised for lining up shots too. You can take a camera choice and wander up the course to check out your target area, or a green, or to decide just what is the best angle to come in at the hole from.

As well as the usual stroke play option, i.e. get round in as few shots as possible, the game includes match play, foursome, fourball and skins options. But then, so does every golf game worth its salt. It also allows you to play either as an amateur or professional, which means you can start off with a high handicap and enjoy the satisfaction of knocking it down to scratch, providing you find it difficult enough to actually need a handicap, of course.

At the moment, *Actua Golf* seems to do nothing wrong, without really getting you massively enthusiastic about it either. Mind you, watching a bloke swing a club isn't exactly as adrenaline-fuelling





6 With a decent tee shot lying on the fairway, he shouldn't have much trouble hitting the green from out here.

7 Long distance camera views look pretty, but are a bit naff for getting good results.

8 The grid displays a rather bumpy green.

son

as coming face-to-screen with a Hell Baron for the first time.

At this late stage in development it certainly looks the part, and the control system (nothing too innovative, golf aficionados won't be too surprised to hear) is simple enough, the greens behave like they're supposed to, no mad variations or, even worse, straight-rolling marble effect here. There's even a sarcastic commentary from that bloke who does the co-commentary with Peter Allis on the BBC.

PGA Tour is a tough act for Actua to follow, and it'll be an interesting contest between the duo once we get the final version in. Then, we can see how it stands up after it's been through the CD mangle that is the Play Evaluation Station.



9 Multiple camera angles should put you clearly in the picture.

10 Oops! Landed one in the bunker have we?

11 When water is in the frame, it's best to hit too long rather than too short.

12 That's the way to do it!

13 A moderately easy putt, and it looks like he's going to get it.



PLAY⁺ information

- Design team: Bullfrog/Krisalis
- Team leader: Sean Cooper
- Where at: 75%
- Target release: March 31st
- Publisher: EA/Bullfrog

Magic Carpet

It wowed games journos, it won loads of industry and magazine awards, but, on PC CD-ROM, *Magic Carpet* only sold to those with turbo-nutter bastard spec Pentiums. Everyone else just sulked that it wouldn't run properly. "Hang on", says Ian Lynch, "that won't be a problem with the power of PlayStation. If they get the conversion right, it'll be blinding!"

▼ Castles form the basis of your domain, protect them from harm so you can continue to collect mana and grow in power.



Magic Carpet was a rare thing indeed, a game ahead of its time. Released on PC CD-ROM in late '94 it not only allowed Bullfrog to just about get away with the claim that it created a new genre, 'the arcade action world sim', but the technology-blinded designers simply got carried away with the extra effects the Pentium chip afforded them. They produced a game which simply wouldn't run on normal machines to the high levels a hype-fed public expected it too. Result: fairly good sales, but not the blockbuster expected by all parties.

Of course, the PlayStation has solved all this. One console runs all, you don't have to worry about whether your machine is as powerful as that of the designers, they have to meet your requirements. And it's more than powerful enough to cope with the strain of running a full version of *Magic Carpet* (the Saturn version doesn't have everything in it by the way, but more of that later). And the result, although not quite yet finished, looks like being a game with no present comparison on PlayStation – an involved, imaginative, lateral-thinking 3D combat flight sim, on a carpet.

A mystical tale

The game is based in an imaginary world torn asunder by an explosion of magical energy, leaving seven wizards bent on reclaiming the energy, called

mana, which has been scattered around the landscape. Laden with mana, these wizards can take control over the devastated world, lording it over their rivals and re-generating the planet.

Oops, did I say seven wizards? I meant eight. Riding the carpet of sorcerer number eight is where you come in. Actually, you're an apprentice magician, not the full monte just yet, but thanks to the death of your boss, it's been left for you to take on the challenge.

Each of the 75 levels (25 more than on the PC, by the way), features a collection of crazed, mutated creatures, both real and mystical. They're also hungry for mana too, in fact, they're so driven by their need they'll take out anything in their way, especially apprentice wizards on carpets. Dotted around the landscape and in the sky are things that resemble apes, bees, carabs, dragons, emus (with archers on their back), genies, griffins, a kraken, skeletons, trolls, vultures, worms and, the worst of the lot, wyverns. And don't forget, you've seven opponents all intent on beating your carpet once and for all.

On your side, are the powers of sorcery – well, eventually they are. In all, there are 25 spells available in the *Magic Carpet* universe but you start off with absolutely zilch. Saying that, either a mana-collecting possess spell or fireball spell should be close at hand when you start. It's not much though, is it?

Once you begin flying around, however, you'll be able to find fireball,

carpet

rapid fireball, lightning bolt, meteor, homing meteor, wall of fire, lightning storm, crater, earthquake, volcano and 'global death' spells to fight with. As well as the Rambo element, constructive and evasion spells can also be acquired.

You can create a castle (to store all your mana and give you a base), raise an undead army (to keep enemy wizards busy), heal yourself, accelerate forwards, accelerate backwards (get out of trouble very, very quickly), cast a shield spell, use a mana magnet (gathers all the mana around into one large ball so it's easier to pick up), become invisible, deflect incoming fire spells back towards your aggressor, steal another wizard's mana and also teleport back to your castle. Should you be feeling powerful enough, you can even force another wizard to fight to the death, locking him into your area unless he has an accelerate spell in his armoury.

Let's go to work

The mix of wizardry, flight, action and strategy makes for a compelling game scenario, and one that should make a brilliant finished release. Never one to miss the chance of getting out of the office, I sat down with the Bullfrog boys to chat about the development of *Magic Carpet*.

Play: Where did the original idea for *Magic Carpet* come from?

Glenn Corpses (head of research and development): We already had a game engine where you could fly around the landscape but no actual 'game' to go with it. It was Peter Molyneux's (founder of Bullfrog) idea to make it based around a magic carpet, which was great because



we were all looking for a way to use it and the engine wasn't really suitable for a flight simulation anyway.

Play: What ideas did you want it to include?

Sean Cooper (producer): The main idea was that we recreate the sensation of flying, but no one at Bullfrog wanted to do a flight simulator. We hated the fact that they require the user to read a large manual and press virtually every key on the keyboard before they even reach take off stage. We wanted a game where you could just get on and fly. Besides the feeling of flight, we wanted to include complete freedom within the world. In *Magic Carpet* you can fly where you want – there are no linear patterns you have to follow.

We also wanted the game to be fast and furious with a quickness of response.

As it is, the final version will react instantly to your commands, there is no stopping to change gears or go into reverse!

Play: Did this require designing a whole new engine, new routines, or could you adapt your existing library routines?

Glenn: It was a whole new engine and the game evolved from the engine.

Sean: The game was written from scratch as no existing routines were incorporated into the game. It was my first time as a producer and I was very keen to make it as much my project as I could.

Play: Where did you go from there?

Glenn: I was responsible for the visual side – we had the ability to create worlds by tweaking a few controls and so we could easily create as many worlds as we needed. The shape of the world was controlled by a program I wrote, the first version of a fractal landscape generator. The landscape generator then gave me the test data for the actual game engine, the programming routines which basically control what happens on screen. I then spent my time rewriting the map generator and graphic engine, constantly enhancing it. I spent about a year honing the map generator and engine.

Sean: In terms of implementing ideas, we just put them in and played them. I should say that from about four months before the game was completed we were all playing it at Bullfrog. Sometimes ideas would be taken out, sometimes someone would come up with a better way of doing something and occasionally we got it right first time!

Play: What new features did you have to work on which Bullfrog hadn't done before?

Sean: *Magic Carpet* was a bit of a departure for Bullfrog in genre terms in that it was the first ever arcade action world sim.

Glenn: It was our first 3D game and the first Bullfrog program to use texture mapping and gouraud shading. Other technological firsts included translucency effects and reflections. It also includes stereo graphic modes without them being the whole point of the game. Some of the features of the game, like reflections and shadows, required a very fast and expensive PC to be used. The sky was just a flat surface and it would have been nice if the PCs were powerful enough to have displayed it more realistically. Most PC owners turned off the shadows and reflections...

Play: Are all the reflections going to be included in the PlayStation and Saturn conversions?

Glenn: I was waiting for that. The reflections and gouraud shading will only be seen on the PlayStation.

Play: Does the PlayStation version run in the machine's low or hi-resolution mode?

Glenn: Low-res, because the PlayStation does not have enough video RAM to run a game with as much graphics as *Magic Carpet* in Hi-res.

Play: What is the target frame rate for the final version?

Glenn: We want to get it running at 20 frames a second, and so far we're on target for that!

Play: How does this shape up against the PC game? What PC would you need to run the game at the same speed in much the same res as the PlayStation version? Or, indeed, is it faster than any PC?

Glenn: It's faster than a Pentium 90 with an average graphics card. The Pentium version is only 256 colours while the PlayStation version is in 32,768 colours. The PC screen is 320X200 while PlayStation is 320X240 and so this makes it more of a hi-resolution than on PC.

Play: The PlayStation has seriously good sound capabilities, have you changed the sound FX and tunes? If so, how?

Sean: Yes, you're right, the sound capabilities are great on a PlayStation and for this reason the music is spooled off CD instead of midi files which makes a huge difference to the audio quality.

Play: The original game was pretty difficult, and the extra levels really difficult. Have you decided to alter this on PlayStation?

Sean: Yes, we have tweaked the difficulty level so that the game is a bit easier but that doesn't mean it's a walkover, you'll still have to be pretty good to finish this game.

Play: How does using the joypad instead of the mouse or keyboard affect control?

Glenn: We experienced massive problems making the PC version work on a joypad due to the fact that the game had a mouse as the controller and the PC version has only four buttons. The PlayStation joypad has so many extra buttons that we could get every control in it – in a far more user friendly way.

Play: How do the extra 25 levels fit in – do they add on to the end of the original, or are they spread throughout the game?

Sean: The extra 25 levels will all appear at the end of the game. The story line of the game makes it impossible for this to be any other way.



▲ Wizards! That's you that is. A death-dealing, turban-wearing, shagpile rider from hell.

► Beware nasty flying things that breathe fire.



Play: Did some elements of the original design slip over into *Magic Carpet 2*?

Sean: The real element that has slipped over into *Magic Carpet 2* was the code. Retrospectively, we came up with some new ways of changing the gameplay so that it was more strategy based but I should say that this all happened once we had completed *Magic Carpet*.

Glenn: Because of the changing fashions in games when *Magic Carpet* was released, the trend was for simplicity and playability. For this reason, a lot of more complex strategy elements were left out as they weren't what we thought gamers wanted at the time. A lot of those aspects were included in *Magic Carpet 2*, which makes it a very different game.

Play: Have any elements of *Magic Carpet* 2 been added into PlayStation *Magic Carpet*?

Sean: So far we have not included any aspects of *Magic Carpet 2* in this version, but we still have time to do this if we want. There is, of course, one extra spell – the homing meteor, which appears during the hidden worlds final levels.

Glenn: I think I've already mentioned some of the extra features that the PlayStation has in technical terms, but I should mention that the sky is much more realistic on the PlayStation version.

Play: Thanks guys.



Credits

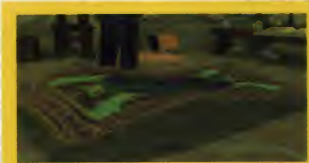
Executive producer – Peter Molyneux
 Producer – Sean Cooper
 Assistant producer – Andy Nuttall
 Graphic artist – Fin McGeachie
 Music & FX – Russell Shaw
 Engine programmer – Glenn Corpse
 PlayStation conversion team – Krisalis



▲ Not the most pleasant spot for a vacation. Even the landscape can turn against you in *Magic Carpet*.

The 1002th Arabian night

To add to the 1001 in the book, you understand. Anyone suffering from post-Aladdin blues after last year's film will love the story in the *Magic Carpet* intro.



Ridge Racer Revolution

We're not talking evolution, this is revolution. A revolution in racing. Forget the rest, there's a new best. Slick-shift Asam buckles up, and wheelspins into action with the new racing Rex.

Sony released the PlayStation to an eager and incredibly willing audience. With Namco signed up as one of the main suppliers of sexy super console software, Sony really showed what their grey baby could do with the PlayStation version of *Ridge Racer*. Nearly. Don't get me wrong. *Ridge Racer* is an absolutely superb game, very playable and incredibly fast, but it has its flaws. Graphic slowdown, dodgy horizon clipping and the lack of a link-up option didn't detract from the playability – too much at least – but the game always felt like a bit of a rush job. Luckily, Namco have now set the record straight.

Ridge Racer Revolution is the game *Ridge Racer* should have been. And this game's a revelation as much as a revolution. The game oozes pure PlayStation power, and really shows what our wonder machine is capable of. Just about all the criticisms that were levelled at their first racer have been addressed in this

sequel. Before you all get carried away, this game is not *Rave Racer*, Namco's latest arcade smash, but rather a step in-between to keep all you punters happy. And happy-material it certainly is.

A revelation as much as a revolution

Ridge Racer Revolution unfortunately still has only one track, but what a track it is. There are the obligatory three variations on it, all changing the route somewhat for each difficulty level, but this time, the variety in route and scenery is absolutely breathtaking. Apart

from the stunning visuals, all of which flow along incredibly smoothly with no slowdown, the tracks are devious little buggers,

with some incredibly challenging sections to negotiate. It's sure to take even the most adept racing fiends a good long while to perfect some of the sharp corners and narrow strips on this course!

Like the original, these courses are played backwards when you complete the first three variants, but unlike the original, there are a couple of new players in *Revolution*. The first is very simply the Angel car. Where the black Devil car took the piss in *Ridge Racer* by caning it past you in Time Trial, in

PLAY Information

Publisher: Namco (Import)
Customer support: N/A
Expected price: £74.99
Expected when: Out now



▲ Bored with the computer? Get a link-up cable and get down to some hi-speed sparring.



Racer olution

► Twisty, turny, and devilishly hard, the track in *RRR* will certainly challenge the most hardened race maestros.

▼ The rear view mirror is an indispensable add-on, allowing you to block any cars trying to overtake.



Twisty Times are Here!

Namco's commitment to the PlayStation even goes as far as designing their own special joypad called the NeGcon. This ingenious device is special. It was designed to fill the gap in control systems for racing or driving games. Anyone that has played a racing game on the normal PlayStation pad will know that it's not the best thing to drive around with, so thankfully, Namco came up with what we call the 'Twisty Thing'.

The NeGcon has a standard D-pad on the left, with four buttons on the right hand side. Two of the buttons are stroked (the red ones). This means that the PlayStation can tell how much you are pressing them, so, for example assigning the accelerator and brake to them in

Ridge Racer Revolution allows some very precise car control.

On the top of the unit there are two more stroked buttons, left and right, which can also detect how much you press 'em. The main feature, though is the hinge in the middle. This wondrous device allows you to directly control the car's steering wheel, just as you would in real life. Twist it a little towards the left and the car veers. Turn it hard and the car responds just as you would expect. The Twisty Thing is pure heaven for avid console racers.

Unfortunately, the device isn't available over here in the UK, at least officially. If you want one though, many shops advertising import games like *Revolution*

may have some imported stocks. So far, the games I've tested with it that work are *Ridge Racer*, *Wipeout*, *Destruction Derby* and of course *Ridge Racer Revolution*. If you have any of these, and are serious about driving games. Buy it, you'll love it.





▲ If you thought the black Devil car was 'ard, check out this guy! You have to be a real expert to beat this Angel.

Revolution there is a spanking new white Angel car that does exactly the same. Cheers. But more importantly there is another new player, a human one. Yes, *Revolution* has a link-up option, so finally you can challenge a friend with another PlayStation to the ultimate in red raw racing. It's this link-up option that was the most sorely missed

feature from *Ridge Racer*, but thank your lucky stars it's here now. 'Cos it's good. Bloody good. There's nothing like challenging a mate to a blasting session with a bit of head-to-head. And that rear-view mirror is bliss! Nobody's getting past me!

There's more. Despite the original sound score being pretty damn fine, Namco have even shifted the sonics up a gear with a handful of new tunes to complement the existing lot, all perfectly matched to the driving frenzy that *Revolution* is in itself. Just make sure you bang up that hi-fi - it's worth it.

On the whole, *Ridge Racer Revolution* is a corker of a game. There is very little wrong with it. I could be finicky and grumble slightly at the fact that there is still only one track, but then again, it is a good track with good variations (And that makes it alright, does it? - Finicky Ed.) The graphics don't quite feel as fast as *Ridge Racer*'s, but then again they are smoother, and the game flows along at a superb rate.

So what can I grumble at? There's gotta be something wrong. I could moan at the length of time it seems to take an import game to appear on PAL machines... but I guess that's another story. Bugger it! *Ridge Racer Revolution* is a damn fine game. If you haven't got *Ridge Racer*, buy it. If you have, then buy it anyway! What the hell! Buy another PlayStation and two copies so you can play with yourself! There! I've said it!

▼ It's a shame you can't see these images moving 'cos the graphics flow incredibly smoothly. Get hold of a copy and check it out for yourself! Now!



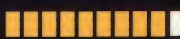



◀ As with the original, *Ridge Racer Revolution* teaches you how to drive the wrong way.

▼ The cars you can choose from are pretty much the same as *Ridge Racer*'s selection. Maybe you can find some more...



PLAY 
recommended

Looks: 
Sounds: 
Speed: 
Value: 

Played 93%
Buy it to flaunt it

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Actua Soccer

PLAY Information

• Publisher: Gremlin Interactive
 • Customer support: 0114 275 3413
 • Expected price: £44.99
 • Expected when: Out now

The wait is definitely now over – welcome to the next generation of football games. Post-Christmas arrival *Actua Soccer* has steamed in to obliterate the opposition. Ryan Butt can't believe his eyes. The crowd around the monitor goes wild.

Rewind. The following is taken from my review of *Striker '96* in the first issue of *Play*.

"After playing *Striker '96* solidly for days on end I got the impression that it's going to take something pretty damn spectacular to tarnish its reputation." Well, it's here, and it's called *Actua Soccer*.

Blown away! That's the only way to describe my state of mind after belting around Gremlin Interactive's virtual-type stadium for 90 minutes. Of course, in reality it was far longer than 90 minutes, 90 hours more like. I was, putting it quite simply, hooked.

And why not? This game nicks the balls from *FIFA '96*, *Striker '96* and *Goal Storm*, and bursts them all in one foul swoop. Isn't this always the case with football games on new machines? You play one, sing its undying praises, and then a couple of months later, something else comes along that completely thrashes it into submission. I always thought *Actua Soccer* might be

good, but I never expected it to be anywhere near as groundbreaking as this... if at all.

Actua Soccer sucks you in by dazzling you with incredibly fluid, motion captured graphics, and then when you're left reeling and rubbing your eyes in amazement, it boots you into touch with highly engaging and rock solid gameplay that is by far the most accurate depiction of the real sport this reviewer has ever seen.

The danger is that if you instantly love a game from the start, chances are you'll be utterly sick of it come a couple of weeks – it's the same with a song you hear on the radio... overplaying often results in utter tedium. However, *Actua Soccer* combines enough accuracy and long term appeal to pass the test of time with honours. Admittedly, some elements are baffling at first, but the more you play, the more you learn and boy are the rewards something else! With practice, *Actua Soccer* allows you to perfect one-touch passing and shooting, perform devastating set pieces that cut



► He chips the ball over the wall and towards the near post.





► Fancy footwork baffles the dim-witted computer defenders, leaving you free to score.

▼ With a free kick in a prime position, you must now plot a route for the ball to take.



▼ Stood in motionless despair as the opposing team go nuts, the goalie can't believe he messed-up.



through the opposition's defence like a chainsaw through ice cream, and master a whole load of fancy skills such as chip shots, dummy passes, and the all important power shots.

Evidently, Gremlin have really gone to town in the presentation department. They must have incorporated a lorry-load of camera men to cast their artistic eye over the proceedings and it also includes on the spot commentary from Barry Davies. The man from the BBC belts out such obvious classic lines as "Oh, he was already on the next page he read it so early" and "The goalie must have shares in a faith company" – nice one Bazza!

Going back to the camera angles, you start the game with seven different perspectives including a FIFA-style diamond, and the classic Kick Off overhead. However, you can tailor these angles to your own requirements by zooming in and out and finely-tuning the viewing angle using the top buttons on the controller. Why didn't someone clever think of that before?

The real beauty of *Actua Soccer* though, isn't in the fancy visuals and gimmicky sounds, it's in the sophisticated gameplay. The player really has to think about where they're passing, and work like mad to get fluid plays going... this is what makes the goals so satisfying and not to be taken for granted like in other football games.

If *FIFA '96* is the Chelsea of footy games – pretty, but not very good really – then *Actua* is Brazil, it's simply world class.

Only one thing is slightly wrong – trying to tackle is a touch too tougher than necessary, something to work on for *Actua Soccer '97*, no doubt.





To complete the winning formula, Gremlin have incorporated custom teams, cups and tournaments, as well as 44 international squads (the top 43 in the world and Wales) comprising of real life players. There's also the added bonus of a special full motion video sequence telling you how the game was made. Now you tell me, what other football game offers this much?

Move over *Striker '96*, farewell *FIFA*, *Actua Soccer* is quite simply the best PlayStation football game.



It's the Brazil of football games

PLAY+ verdict

Looks: 
 Sounds: 
 Brilliance: 
 Value: 

Played 94%
 Everyone's football fantasy!

The Looks and the Lifestyle

No question, from a visual perspective (and indeed any other you'd care to mention, *Actua Soccer* urinates on the opposition from a great height. Here we evaluate why, quite frankly, the others just aren't up to scratch.

FIFA '96

I'm sorry, but no! This pitch looks like one of Van Gough's cast offs with blurry players with all the style and grace of ice-skating elephants in a gravel pit.

Goal Storm

If the *Crash Test Dummies* escaped from the factory for a no-frills kick-around, then this would be the result. Faceless goons going through the motions with no skill whatsoever.

Striker '96

The deposed King. It was nearly there, but the players are far too small to be superstars, and their spontaneity is decided by power-bars... which kind of takes the sting out of the gameplay somewhat. A good second choice though.

Prime Goal Ex

Aw please! These eye-sores look like jigsaw puzzles that have been assembled with oddly-shaped pieces. With a few vital parts lost somewhere along the way. Get 'em away.

Hyper Formation Soccer

Smooth, nicely animated players on parade here... it's just a pity that they haven't evolved since their SNES heyday. Send them all off to the scrap yard where they belong.

Resident

PLAY information

Design team: Capcom of Japan (in-house)
 Team leader: Unknown
 Where at: 40%
 Target release: April
 Publisher: Capcom/distributed by Virgin Interactive

The times... they are-a changin' and Capcom's stunning new show-stopper is evidence enough that the PlayStation is indeed a force to be reckoned with. Featuring possibly the best and most explicit graphics to ever feature in an arcade adventure, *Resident Evil* drags all-comers screaming into its tangled web of intrigue, death and destruction. Ryan Butt takes a deep breath and takes the plunge.

▼ Playing it cool, the detective babe observes a crawling zombie.



I feel sick. Right down in the pit of my burning, nauseous stomach. I feel an uncontrollable urge to let loose a torrent of bile powerful enough to rip through even the sturdiest of lavatory pans. Why? Two reasons really. Firstly, y'know Capcom right? That wholesome company responsible for *Street Fighter*, well they've gone and

produced probably one of the sickest and out and out violent games this journalist has ever witnessed. And secondly, it just so happens to be bloody brilliant, and I for one am going giddy with desire

to get my eager mitts on it.

Resident Evil, as the game in question has now come to be known (after the dodgy working title of *Biohazard*), is an instant horror masterpiece combining snippets from the best video nasties in history with a gaming style that up until now has been coined only by Infogrames in their classic action/adventure *Alone in the Dark*.

The game combines a dark, sinister plot with the kind of graphics that make you want to seduce and bed your PlayStation. It's just the kind of refreshing remedy that Capcom needed to steer their image away from the endless reams of beat-'em-ups. *Resident Evil* generates tension by the bucket-load and is compelling enough to make you feel proud to own a PlayStation.

Guns play an integral part, you actually feel as though you're brandishing a deadly weapon as you play. You can hear the shots

ringing in your ears, you can smell the acrid smoke of burning gun-powder, you can feel the recoil as you unload rounds and most importantly, you can actually see the damage that you dish out in stark reality before your unbelieving eyes!

Have you placed your order yet, if not, why not?

Manic mansion

Set in a secluded county mansion *Resident Evil* centres around the hideous consequences that occur through scientists fiddling around with nature. Within the confines of the building, top-dogs from the world of science have been conducting government-funded experiments in bio-technology – crafting and altering the DNA structure of life-forms.

Tut tut, don't these people watch films? Surely they should know that anyone dabbling with

Gasp from the past

As Capcom have mentioned, one of the big influences behind the zombies in *Resident Evil* was perhaps one of the best zombie flicks ever made – George A Romero's *Zombies Dawn of the Dead*.

Made in 1979 on a considerably low budget, Romero's vision of hell on Earth was withdrawn from sale in 1984 after the video recordings act rendered all uncensored videos illegal. However, the film was re-submitted in a severely edited form in 1992. Luckily, a glance through fellow Paragon colleague, 'Mallo's' video collection revealed that... yes, he does in fact possess a full un-cut copy of the film (hence plenty of explicit piccies!). Also, just for posterity, 'Mallo' even owns an original Betamax copy of the film... err, apparently!



Evil



nature meets with grizzly consequences. If they had paid more attention to the dangers then maybe all communication with the outside world wouldn't have been lost. And maybe you, as a member of S.T.A.R.S. (Special Tactics and Rescue Services), wouldn't have had to infiltrate the seedy stately home to track down and rescue the daft blighters.

The player can opt to play as either Chris or Lucy, two members of the rescue operation who've been assigned



Talk is cheap

To paint a clearer picture of what *Resident Evil* is all about, we spoke once again to the extremely chatty head of Capcom of Japan's International Sales Department, Mr. Yamaguchi.

Play: How long has *Resident Evil* been in production?

MY: It has taken about two years to develop, although one year was spent getting to know, and understand, the hardware itself.

Play: *Resident Evil* is a totally different gaming style for Capcom, who for so long have been associated mainly with beat-'em-ups. How did the third person perspective action/adventure game come about?

MY: The basic idea was to create something very horrific which you can not really experience by watching horror films or reading books. I wouldn't like to classify this game simply as an action/adventure, I would call it a 'Survival Horror'!

Play: Indeed, the theme for the

game is very sinister, how was it devised? Was it based upon any films, books, legends or myths, be they Japanese or otherwise?

MY: Well, we use vast amounts of movies and books for research, therefore we cannot specify which one in particular was used. However, we used the film *Dawn of the Dead* as a reference point for creating the zombies.

Play: The story centres around a government bio-technology experiment gone wrong. Why did you

decide to set the location in a mansion as opposed to, say a laboratory complex or suchlike?

MY: There is a laboratory in the game. The reason why we chose the mansion setting was because we thought it would feel more natural to the player – we thought a mansion would give out a more realistic feeling.

Play: Much of the attention will undoubtedly focus on the gruesome nature of some of the in-game deaths. Were these included to make

▼ Gun poised and ready for action, Gill enters the unknown.



to rescue the scientists. To you or me though, it's obvious – they cocked-up big time and you should just blow the mansion to smithereens and forget all about the daft sods. After all, they knew the risks when they signed-up for the gig right?

Unfortunately, it's not as easy as that and you must go by the book. On arrival at the mansion, sure enough, all of the scientists have turned into flesh-craving zombies and every insect and animal in the vicinity has mutated into a giant, man-eating beast, quite capable of digesting a block of flats. Obviously you can do nothing for them (except perhaps put

them out of their misery), so your job for the day now is simply to find out what went wrong and report back. Easier said than done as you will soon discover!

Assigning a particular genre to *Resident Evil* is like trying to snare a chicken with your teeth! Technically speaking it's an arcade adventure, but it also combines elements of RPG and features plenty of adrenaline-pumping action that will put the willies up even the toughest of players. The game is stylish, sophisticated and instantly compelling and will not only test your intelligence, cunning, and reflexes, but your nerves as well. The version we played was little over 40% complete and thus had none of the puzzles in place – it was purely action at this stage... and boy was it frantic!

The chilling tale kicks off as the S.T.A.R.S. team assemble in the hallway for debriefing. There is no sound to speak of and all is deserted... or so you're led to believe. However, it's not until you've chosen your desired character and started to explore that the full horror of the predicament is rammed

home in blood-curdling fashion. Zombies! Loads of 'em! Don't shoot until you see the whites of their eyes! Armed with a pistol as standard you creep around, uncertain of what you'll find around the next corner, and then you're confronted by groaning zombies that immediately smell your warm, succulent flesh and home-in for a nibble. Fail to get off a couple of shots before they get to you and the creepy, undead foes start chewing at your neck amidst spurts of red. Floor them in time and they collapse in a pool of blood – however, sometimes your puny pistol may not have killed them off and they crawl across and start chopping into your leg. No problem, as an automatic reaction Chris will maliciously stomp on their heads crushing them underfoot. Or if you opted to play as Lucy she'll attempt goal by booting their decaying heads clean off of their shoulders... yeeeah!

You may have already gathered that *Resident Evil* is high in gore content – too bloody right, and this is just the kind of stark nastiness we want. None of this watered-down, cotton-wool covered nonsense here thank you, we're big

▲ As the chilling story unfolds, the detectives investigate a vital clue.



► A wrong turning later, and Chris finds himself in a Hitchcock movie!



the game appeal to a more natural audience, or was it simply to emphasise the realism and atmosphere?

MY: In real life, if a person gets shot their head might blow off and there will be a lot of blood. In past games, people didn't pay too much attention to enemies that disappear unnaturally when they die. Therefore we wanted to create something which looks very natural and will satisfy the audience's appetite for realism.

Play: How many people are involved in the project, and what hardware is being used to produce the game?

MY: There are over 50 programmers currently working on the title, using mainly Apple Macintosh computers as well as Silicon Graphics workstations.

Play: How much has *Alone in the Dark* been an influence?

MY: Originally, we didn't aim to create a game which resembles *Alone in the Dark*. However, as we were developing the game and learning more about the PlayStation it began

to look similar. When you play the game though, you'll notice dramatic differences between the two. Of course, we did use *Alone in the Dark* as a reference point for developing *Resident Evil*.

Play: Shock values plays a prominent part in *Resident Evil*, but one of the biggest shocks in our office was that it is from Capcom – so long associated with one type of gaming genre. Do you consider *Resident Evil* a gamble, or is this a sign that we can expect a dramatic

change in direction from you in the future?

MY: We wouldn't like to be associated purely for producing fighting games, and this is our chance to offer something new that will appeal to the public. This is just the start though, we consider *Resident Evil* to be a passage for creating a much better game in the future.

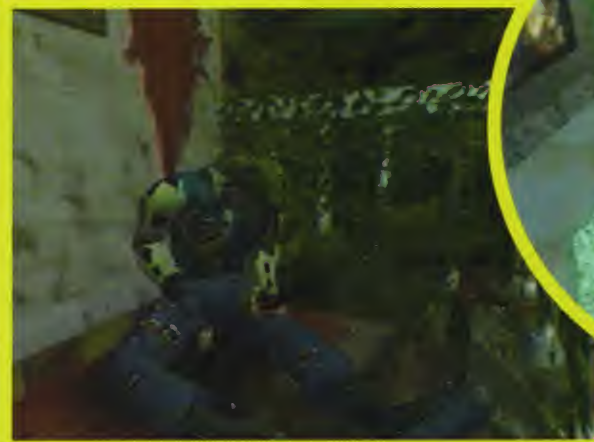
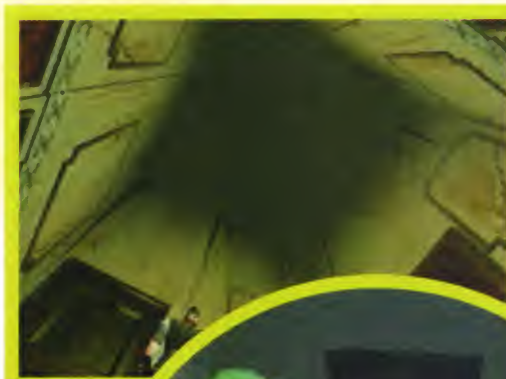
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enough to take it!

Of course, zombies aren't the only foes that stalk the dank dwellings. There are grossly over-sized spiders (which one of my colleagues couldn't even bring himself to look at!), as well as gigantic snakes, head-hunting frogs, and in scenes reminiscent of Alfred Hitchcock's movie *The Birds*, flesh-eating ravens.

What really captures the imagination are the superb visuals. The characters and monsters are real-time polygons and are placed against stunning, finely detailed pre-rendered backgrounds. Although you have no control over the perspective, the view is constantly changing – sometimes three or four times per room to give the player the best and most artistic angle over the proceedings.

Although there is still so much to be inserted into the mix, Capcom promise plenty of alternative weaponry, taxing problems and clues to solve along the way. In short, this is shaping up to be the definitive PlayStation title to look out for.



▲ The resident hunk takes time out to ponder his predicament.

Gun play

If the size of your weapon really is inversely proportional to a certain part of the male anatomy, poor Ivan Popovich is going to have to undergo the same surgery as that Yank copper did on *The Word*. The Steel Cossack's weapons are very large indeed...

30mm

Your basic wooden spoon weapons – weak but reliable.

They keep on chugging away long after you've run out of other ammo.



50mm Vulcans

Giant-sized versions of the minigun from

Predator, these whirling dervishes make short work of the smaller enemies.



Lasers

For full-on burning holes in stuff action, these rapid-firing

babies are just what the Soviet psychopath ordered.



Plasma Guns

They might fire quite slowly, but anything hit by a white-hot ball of fourth-state matter won't forget it in a hurry.



Z-beam

Yes! Yes! Yes! It's even less green than orange, but this is what all aspiring maniacs are after. Eat radioactive death!



Krazy Ivan

Giant robot warriors aren't just limited to Japanese anime – now the Russians have them too! A vodka-swilling Andy McDermott clanks into action.

If you've ever fancied the idea of stomping around futuristic battlefields in a 40 foot high armoured suit packing the kind of weapons that would make even Arnold Schwarzenegger droop with inadequacy, *Krazy Ivan* is the game to make your mecha-laden dreams a reality. Aliens, as is their wont, have invaded the Earth, setting up force fields in strategic areas as bases for conquest. In the asthmatic voice of the bloke who does all those video trailers and the intro to *Knight Rider*, "Only One Man Can Stop Them™" – Ivan Popovich, the titular Krazy Ivan.

Ivan is so named because, well, he's crazy. Or indeed Krazy. March hare, section eight, oi nutter, m-a-d MAD. In a situation like this, with murderous extra-terrestrials trying to take over the world, he's also exactly the person you need to turn the aliens into chunky salsa and send them home in a jar.

▼ Behmoth looks like a punk version of an Imperial Walker, but a few shots to his vitals will see him off.



Ivan has the help of a Steel Cossack powersuit, a nifty piece of kit that gives an equally good account of itself on the battlefield or fighting the rush at Sainsburys. The Cossack starts off with a pair of 30mm cannons, twin 50mm Vulcans (and we're not talking short relatives of Mr Spock here, but multi-barrelled gatling guns) and a few weedy homing missiles, but can be quickly upgraded after each mission to end up as a total death machine – yeehah! – bristling with lasers, plasma cannons and the excellent Z-beam, which won't win any friends at Greenpeace headquarters but rapidly converts alien robots into mere radioactive slag.

Your extra-terrestrial enemies start out small and eminently shootable – once destroyed, they drop handy power-up pods and release human prisoners, whom you can scoop up for extra points. The robots, however, quickly become a tougher proposition. Each level has a number of Sentients, which are extra value versions of the usual cannon fodder and have obviously been designed by someone who's a relative of Zoltar from *Battle of the Planets*. Many of the malevolent mechs resemble animals – spiders, squids, mosquitoes and (the best looking of the bad guys) tigers all have mechanical counterparts who are all keen to introduce Ivan to that skinny chap with the scythe.

Ivan

It is vital for Ivan to take out the Sentients quickly – if he goes more than two minutes without killing something big, he not only loses his membership of the Psycho Club, but an evil version of the Steel Cossack, the Black Knight, beams in for a one-on-one barney. The Black Knight has all the weapons of Ivan's own anthropomorphic steed, and can also teleport around to avoid trouble, so it's best to get your ass in gear and whack the Sentients as quickly as possible.

Once they've all been turned into scrap metal, Ivan has to locate and destroy the aliens' shield generator, which is powering the force field. The generator is heavily defended, though, and breaching its shielding requires everything the Steel Cossack can throw at it. When the generator is down, the alien squatters can be handed a polite eviction notice and booted smartly back from whence they came.

Krazy Ivan promises non-stop action, and it delivers. From the moment you enter the first zone, you're constantly pestered by enemy robots crawling,



▲ The massive Dedlok might have trouble with his spelling, but he makes up for it by being harder than a month-old pie.



PLAY Information

- Publisher: Sony Interactive
- Customer support: 0151 282 3333
- Expected price: £39.99
- Expected when: Jan 19th



▲ Suck radioactive death, y'robotic pazzler! Hot two Z-beam action.

sliding and flying around your Steel Cossack. They don't really take too many hits, but they're not invincible either. They're just a nuisance, a second, third, or even fourth enemy when your finger is away from the fire button. This is what we want. None of this 'thought' nonsense – mindless carnage is what made video games great, and *Krazy Ivan* upholds the tradition in style.

It also upholds the PlayStation's reputation for gorgeous graphics and great sound FX – the guns really roar, instead of the usual feeble 'ut-ut-ut' noises you get in some shoot 'em-ups, and the alien Sentients are quite stunning to watch. Some of them are almost too good-looking to shoot. Almost, but not quite, that would be silly.

Even the non-game sections of *Krazy Ivan* have had a lot of time spent on them – the level select screen features a revolving globe of the Earth. Nothing too unusual about that, you might think, but it's also got the rest of the solar system and lens flare from the sun as your viewpoint spins around! The inevitable FMV sequences are a cut above the usual irrelevant rubbish as well, actually dropping the odd hint about what to





Join the one-man Red Army!

expect in the next level, while being vaguely amusing enough to watch more than once. Maybe even more than twice, which for FMV is pretty rare. The computer-generated cut-scenes are also excellent, a few shots (such as those of a giant transporter plane) being perilously close to looking real. *Babylon 5*, watch out...

Psygnosis have attached their customary attention to detail to a no-nonsense blaster of the *Doom* school, and the effort has paid off – *Krazy Ivan* is terrific fun. Disengage brain, engage trigger finger, turn the volume up to 11 and join the one-man Red Army!



PLAY 
recommended

Looks: 
Sounds: 
Big Guns: 
Value: 

Played 90%

Die screaming, alien scum



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Johnny Bazzoo



Ever wanted a quiff that bounced along as you walked? Try starring in West Side Story. Can't act? Try US Gold's new pelvic platformer then. Our self-proclaimed shaven-headed hunk Asam did...

Games boasting of 360,000 shaded polygons per second? Who cares.

You don't need '3D',

'virtuality', and 'link-up', to make a good game, do you? Not according to US Gold – and I agree. What the Birmingham bravehearts seem to have proved with their snazzy first PlayStation offering *Johnny Bazoookatone* is that the most important element in a game is... wait for it... your hero's quiff. Get ready with your hair gel people...! Well, maybe not.

Brought to you in full-colour 2D-platform-o-vision, *JB* is, as you'd expect, a game where you jump around a bit and run around like a hound dog. The evil L Diablo has nicked *JB*'s lovely guitar Anita. Johnny's all shook up about this, and is on a mission to recover it... and that's where you come in.

Set through around 30 levels or so, *JB* is a fairly large game. The graphics are beautiful, and the sound is sexy. In fact, the music score in *JB* is one of the best I've heard in a game to date. There's a



The music score is one of the best

whole mix of tunes, ranging from some ultra-cool jazzy stuff to some smart trip-hop, all of which sets the feel to this game perfectly.

So how does it play? As with all platformers, the most important element of the game is mental mapping. You've

gotta remember which route to take. There are things to collect, but these aren't entirely necessary to complete the game, your main objective is to just get to the end of each level without being returned to sender. But, predictably, it's not quite as simple as all that. An integral part of platformers is puzzle solving. On the

whole, most of the tasks you must complete are quite logical, i.e. after a few attempts, it is fairly easy to see how to get through the level, or how to defeat the end-of-section guardians.

Unfortunately with *JB*, on too many occasions you are faced with some incredibly illogical puzzles that have no obviously apparent solution. It can be quite frustrating to go over a stage umpteen times with no success, and then suddenly find you've completed it. And you don't know how.

Despite this, the game on the whole is still enjoyable. Initially, it can be a little hard to get into control-wise – I found that the number of joystick configurations was a bit limiting. Once you've mastered the controls though, as ever, the game really comes into its own.

Overall, apart from the irritations I've mentioned, *Johnny Bazoookatone* is a very well presented game which is rewarding to play.

With a decent variety of settings and stages, including underwater sections and a karting stage played in ventilation shafts, there is plenty to keep you amused. The attention to detail is good, and there are loadsa neat touches throughout the game. If you fancy a change from frilly 3D and fancy virtuality, stick on yer blue suede shoes, put on yer dancing pants and get mellow to the cool-blue sounds of *JB*.

katone



Bad hair day

Yup. *Play* brings you a totally opinionated and uncompromising top ten of the worst hairstyles ever.

1. Elton John

You look silly Elton, with your pansy wigs and your orange 'hair'. Sort your life out. And quit with the slushy songs. They're crap.

2. Michael Bolton

What can I say. You sing like you've got dough in your mouth and your hair is, well, a mess. Chop it off. What the hell – chop your head off.

3. Dennis Pennis

You're a fool Dennis. You're unfunny, and have bad dress sense. People laugh at you, not with you. Get a life.

4. Gazza

You've changed hairstyles more times than you've been on diets. And they've all been crap. Replace your head with a football.

5. Mark Lamar

Who do you think you are? Tintin? Your hair must be a fire hazard, with all that grease on it. Try using Swarfega – it doesn't burn.

6. Don King

You might promote some good boxing matches, but you look bloody silly. You look like an extra from *The Munsters*.

7. Ken Dodd

I don't care how funny people think you are, you look ridiculous. That duster's got a better hairstyle. And it's funnier.

8. Toyah Wilcox

Flame on Toyah! I won't be rude to yah, 'cos you're a nice girl really. You could do with getting into the 1990's though.

9. Nigel Kennedy

You can play the violin, but you're not exactly a style leader in the hair department. You look like you stuck your finger into a plug socket.

10. Valderama

Why have you got a bush on your head? If you're not careful, you'll get a few footballs lost in your head-forest. Maybe that's the plan...

Also rans:





Bobby Charlton, Tina Turner, Chris Tarrant, Michael Hasselhoff, Keifer Sutherland, The cast of *WWF*.

PLAY+ Information

- Publisher: US Gold
- Customer support: 0121 356 0831
- Expected price: £39.99
- Expected when: January

♥ That surly bouncer looks like the one that kicked me out of a club the other night...

PLAY+ recommended

Looks: 
Sounds: 
Hairstyles: 
Value: 

Played 85%

Neat 'n' sweet, to a top beat



Alone

In The Dark!

Jack's back

PLAY 
information

Publisher: Infogrames
 Customer support: 0171 738 8199
 Expected price: £39.99
 Expected when: Late January

Although this is supernatural PI Edward Carnaby's first adventure on PlayStation, the game is actually a sequel to the original PC classic from 1992, *Alone In The Dark*. Mark Wynne steps back in time.

P C adventure conversion alert! Switch to serious mode! Begin review!

It's 1924, you're responding to a California-marked telegram from fellow PI Ted Striker, you get there, he's vanished whilst investigating a child abduction. Great. Begin intro, it shows Striker prowling the grounds of a huge mansion, belonging to villain One Eyed Jack. Ted thinks that Jack has kidnapped baby Grace for a bizarre, voodoo ritual.

The intro cuts away as Striker, having found his quarry in a barren bedroom, is overpowered by a magically animated doll...

Time for you to take over. The game proper opens up with you at the gates of the mansion. PC expatriates will immediately notice that the PlayStation version has been treated to some extensive cosmetic changes. The distinctive, polygon characters have been tweaked with gouraud shading and superimposed 2D animations to give the game a more organic look. It doesn't really work though, lessening the original's stark atmosphere. That's not all – the stunning backgrounds have also been altered here and there, and several new FMV 'rides' linking various sections of the game have been added. These do work, enhancing the tension-packed feel to *Alone*, helped by the menacing soundtrack.

There's not much time



◀ Getting chased by gangsters is difficult enough, but the frequent (and often excruciating) slowdown makes play irritating.

▼ On board the galleon, you're treated to more inspired visuals, sadly besmirched by some ugly texture mapping.



to look around, however, as a sleeping gangster jolts awake and lumbers toward you. Flip to the function menu, select your pistol and a crack sounds out, as the gangster reels back. The copious blood of the original PC series has been replaced with metallic

After seeing Resident Evil, this seems dated

shards and ethereal mists, but the effect is still rewarding. Walk over his body and you can collect his possessions, such as ammo, better weapons and books which can be read for clues.



There's a wide variety of weapons to experiment with, most enjoyably the sabre (it doesn't need reloading and is great fun) and control of Carnaby is easy and intuitive, with searches, combat and even hand-to-hand fighting all quickly mastered. This is important, since there's no doubt that *Alone* is as much an arcade game as an adventure, with early battles in the mazes providing some intense action. Once you get into the house, professional gunslingers cruising the corridors make everything up to that point seem like a walk in the park...

You won't get anywhere, though, without solving a lot of physical puzzles, which veer between the pleasingly obvious (push a statue out of the way to reveal a new route) to the downright wicked (blow air into a paper bag and pop it in an enemies' ear to get his attention). Always a downer for a puzzler, *Alone* is rigidly linear and it can get frustrating when you start struggling because you can't get a hook on the programmers' logic. But, the sheer style of the game does compensate for this.

Alone is a complex project, and this shows in the choices the designers have seemingly had to make. For instance, the price for the lush visuals is speed.

Infogrames' PlayStation conversion simply cannot pop up each new scene as quickly as the PC version, which has all the code dumped on its hard disc for immediate access.

Constantly dragging information from the CD means that many scenes take several seconds to 'access. For me, this not only damages the fluidity of play, but leads to some frustrating deaths, as combat can slow down badly. Are graphics really



I feel awful... Really awful!

▲ A gun-toting baddie defends a secret pathway to the gardens, where the adventure begins proper. Check the corpses of bashed baddies for loot and weapons.

▼ An exquisitely ugly meanie saunters away.



such a be all and end all that Infogrames should make the fairly pointless effort of tweaking already good visuals and yet ignore the fundamental design problem of slow disc accessing?

Set against the imminent *Resident Evil*, this seems rather dated then, with neither the gore, speed or action of Capcom's eagerly awaited title, or, for that matter, Delphine's *Fade To Black*.

Saying that, those gagging for a 3D extravaganza will find *Alone* rewarding enough - it's by no means a bad game, just a bit flawed. Really though, if you don't mind waiting a few months you should hang on for one of its impending rivals, which promise to exploit the power of the PlayStation much more fully.

PLAY verdict

Looks: ██████████
Sounds: ██████████
Headaches: ██████████
Value: ██████████

Played 77%

A disappointing conversion of a classic

Save Yourself!

If you haven't got a Memory Card you're not going to stand much chance at this game, believe us. You can't just waltz through *Alone*, hoping to bluff your way to the end. It's essential that after solving each puzzle, or making any significant progress, you save the game to one of two, alternate slots. If you keep switching between these two slots, you can always backtrack one save if you make a fatal mistake. Since ammo is so scarce as well, I found it useful to return to a saved game just before meeting each baddie. Then, if you eliminate them without using much ammo, you can save the game, or if it turns into a long scrap, just quit and take him on again. It may sound excessive, but *Alone* gets so tight in later sections, that progressing cleanly, with maximum ammo and health becomes imperative. And don't forget, if you see a flask, swill the contents.



► Ice, ice, baby! One of the most impressive special moves in the entire game!



Primal

What would happen if dinosaurs and man were thrust back together after 25 million years of extinction? Nick Roberts reckons it's a recipe for a fight.

There are beat 'em-ups with 3D polygon characters, there are beat 'em-ups with fancy snowball special moves and then there's just good old solid punch-ups, like *Primal Rage*.

The intro tells the story of how man and dinosaurs have met up after all these years, with scenes of a T-Rex chomping a car and meteorites crashing into high-rise buildings. Very impressive, I must say. Even the way the logo animates onto the screen with a growl had me ducking for cover.

Character-wise, you can choose from seven prehistoric punchers with two T-Rex beasts, a couple of mad apes and something that looks like a Triceratops on the conveyor belt. They each pack an impressive collection of special moves, some of which you wouldn't want to perform with your granny around (one of these critters has terrible wind). These are a little tricky to pull off at first, but the joystick configuration can be changed to suit your style of play improving things no end.

When the arcade game first arrived in this country it turned a few heads. The top beat 'em-ups of the time had never tried anything like this before. *Street Fighter* used 2D traditional character animation, *Mortal Kombat* used digitised live actors and *Virtua Fighter* had them all swirling around in 3D. The *Primal Rage* developers had created their new characters using stop motion animation techniques. Modelling them all first then taking hundreds of individual frames, pieced back together by computer to give the finished effect.

The animation works really well too.

There are set pieces for a victory or defeat, and all the special moves have been precisely timed and incorporated into the PlayStation game. The main problem I have with this

The animation works really well

conversion is the loading time. Whenever a new character comes onto the screen you get a tiny CD rotating in the corner and have to wait what seems like ages for the game to continue. During the final battle, where characters flick on and

off the screen all the time, this really becomes a headache! Surely with all this new technology the CD reading times can be improved over this.

Primal Rage is never going to be a ground breaking beat 'em-up, well, maybe only in a literal way, but it's a fun game for a little light relief after all those deadly serious combat blood baths and 3D fighting tournaments. Having special tug-of-war and endurance modes and hidden games of Volleyball and Bowling also adds a little extra, especially to its long-term appeal.

Fun with two-players, but equally as playable with one, *Primal Rage* is well worth checking out.



► Double dino action and one of the monsters has been doing his been pulling off moves too often. The cheese indicates this! Boring player time.

PLAY+
information

- Publisher: Time Warner Interactive
- Customer support: 0171 391 4300
- Expected price: £44.99
- Expected when: February

Isn't that a T-Rex eating your car?

A catastrophic collision between two giant meteorites in space sends burning rocks the size of planets spinning towards Earth. They pound through the atmosphere and destroy cars,

buildings and civilisations on impact. From the rubble a new race is born, The Draconians. Who will rule the new Urth? I'd guess someone with very sharp teeth and the breath of a dead sheep.



▲ The long-necked Vertigo takes a bite at the green version of himself. It's time for a counter-attack!



Rage



▲ It's a tough battle between two competitors and Blizzard now has his head in the dust!



▲ Arrghh, the dinosaurs are invading our land, quick Ryan, hit it round the head with a stick or something! Oh, my hero!

PLAY+ 
recommended

Looks: 
Sounds: 
Snarls: 
Value: 

Played 85%
Plenty of Jurassic japes!

Shock Wave Assault: Operation Jumpgate

PLAY information

● Publisher: Electronic Arts
● Customer support: 01753 546465
● Price: £44.99
● Expected when: Out Now

In the wake of Shock Wave Assault comes another formidable task – get the little alien bastards on their own turf! With two games now in one, Play asks... is this good value or what?!

Software companies... who needs them? (er, well, I suppose we do), one minute they tell us to review one game, and then the following month they tell us that the same game is in actual fact being spliced together with the sequel to make one complete package. Fine.

Anyway, the game in question is the gripping alien-invasion shoot 'em-up *Shock Wave Assault*, which scored 87% last month. Just as we were all geared up to write a follow up review on *Operation Jumpgate*, the next gripping instalment of the *Shock Wave* saga, Electronic Arts get on the blower and tell us they've altered their strategy and will now be releasing both games as one. Ah, time to do a strategic update methinks!

OK, if you've read issue three you'll already know about *Shock Wave Assault* and *Operation Jumpgate* continues the tense storyline. If you didn't, don't worry, you'll soon pick it up. After vanquishing the alien forces from Earth, Omaha, lead by the lovely Commander Stewart have decided to chase the invaders back to Mars in order to wipe them out once and for all (God – how egocentric can you get!). Whereas *Shock Wave Assault*

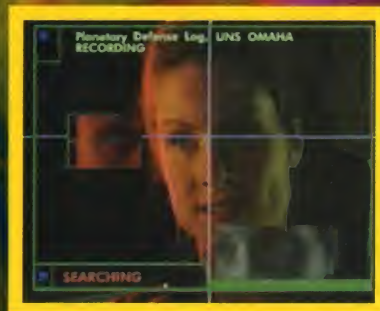
started off moderately easy and then gradually enhanced the difficulty factor as you progressed, *Operation Jumpgate* shoves you straight in at the deep end with possibly one of the hardest opening levels this reviewer has ever experienced. And the game itself doesn't get any easier.

So now it's all systems go as the plot thickens and the challenge doubles. I have to say that graphically, the game is a step down from its predecessor – there are none of the typical Earth familiarities, just barren landscape. Despite looking rather dull and being distinctly harder than before, *Operation Jumpgate* is still a right riveting game to play and once you get back into the swing of destroying vast amounts of aliens at a frantic rate of knots, you'll want to keep coming back for more.

The fact that both games are now one means that you'd be hard pushed to find a better deal. OK, so it may not be state-of-the-art in terms of PlayStation software, and indeed if you can tolerate the endless barrage of taunts from mindless 3DO owners claiming that they've had both games for aeons (and better no doubt!), then this package should be all you need for a fun-packed weekend of hedonistic heroism. In short, including *Jumpgate* pushes the score up to 89% for *Shock Wave Assault*.



▲ Shock, horror, your path is blocked by an alien war machine. Evasive action or fight? – The choice is yours!



▲ Take out the gun towers – they pose a hideous threat to Omaha's chances on following you through the canyon.



PLAY recommended

Looks: ■■■■■■■■
Sounds: ■■■■■■■■
Hostility: ■■■■■■■■
Value: ■■■■■■■■

Played 89%
Shock Wave now a better shock!

Wall of Game

Once again our very own Wall Of Game graces another packed issue. What is rapidly becoming a beat 'em-up buyers and tips guide rolled into one continues this month with the prehistoric pummeller, *Primal Rage*. And this time, we've crammed every move we know about on there. All of them, we think.

So, be amazed and prepare for a roaring, untamed helping of bloodthirsty action! While we're at it, we want you, our beloved readers, to send in any suggestions you might have for any special games that you think are worthy to be placed onto a future edition of Wall Of Game. Platformers, shoot-'em-

ups or sports games – we want to know which game you are crying out for to get the Play treatment. And soon we'll think of a way to represent them on a two page poster.

Send in any ideas to the usual Play address and we'll consider them over endless cups of coffee and more than a few fags (If there are under 16s reading

this, a) do you parents don't ever start, it's to and buggers your football up).

In the meantime, here's the full run down on *Primal Rage*, available in all good shops soon.



Primal Rage

Primal Rage in the arcades went down a treat with beat-'em-up fans who craved for more after *Street Fighter 2*. Taking the prehistoric theme, whilst throwing in countless moves and more gore, *Primal Rage* took beat-'em-ups just that little bit further, mainly into the comedy zone (intentional, not unintentional) and it enjoyed a successful stint on yesterday's men, the 16-bit and even hand-held consoles. As you should have just read about, our review of the PlayStation version reckons it's a sound enough conversion with well detailed graphics,

atmospheric sound and a decent variety of moves.

Now read our players' guide and become an expert in prehistoric ways!



PLAY Information

● Publisher: Time Warner Interactive
● Customer support: 0171 391 4300
● Expected price: £44.99
● Expected when: February

Played 85%
Plenty of Jurassic japes!

the Play Wall of Game

Primal Rage



Armadon

Mega Charge
Hold HQ/LQ, Press Away, Down, Towards.

Spinning Death
Hold HQ/LF, Press Away, Towards, Down.

Flying Spikes
Hold HF/LF, Press Away, Up.

Iron Maiden
Hold HF/LQ, Press Away, Up, Towards.

Gut Gouger
Hold HQ/HF/LQ, Press Towards, Away (Close Range)

Homocution Uppercut
Hold HQ/HF/LQ, Press Down, Towards, Towards, Up-Towards.

Eat Human
Hold HQ/HF/LQ/LF, Press Up, Towards, Down.

Fatality

Gut Fling
Hold HQ/HF/LQ, Press Down, Down, Down, Up.

Meditation
Hold HQ/HF/LQ/LF, Press Towards, Down, Away, Towards, Towards.

Impaler
Hold HQ/HF/LQ, Press Down, Away, Up, Down.



Diablo

Torch
Hold HQ/LQ, Press Up, Towards (holding buttons extends duration of move).

Inferno Flash
Hold HF/LQ/LF, Press Up, Away

Hot Foot
Hold HF/LF, Press Away-Up, Down-Towards.

Mega Lunge
Hold HQ/LF, Press Away, Down, Towards.

The Pulverizer
Hold HQ/LF, Press Up, Towards, Down.

Fireball (Fast)
Hold HQ/LQ, Press Down, Towards

Fireball (Slow)
Hold HK/LF, Press Down, Towards

Eat Human
Hold HQ/HF/LQ/LF, Press Down, Up, Down.

Fatality

Incinerator
Hold HQ/HF/LQ/LF, Press Up-Away, Down, Down, Towards

Fireball

Hold HF/LQ/LF, Press Towards, Towards, Towards, Towards,

Infernal
Hold HQ/LQ/LF, Press Up, Down, Up, Down, Down.

Sauron



Cranium Crusher
Hold HQ/LF, Press Down, Up.

Leaping Bone Bash
Hold HF/LQ, Press Down, Up.

Fatality

Flesh Eating
Hold HQ/LQ, Press Down, Down.



Mega Punch (Fake)
Hold HQ/LQ, Press Down, Up.
Punching Bag
Hold HQ/LF, Press Towards, Down, Away, Up (in-close)
Tap HQ to repeatedly punch victim. Press HF/LQ/LF to uppercut him at varying trajectories.

Mega Punch (Short)
Hold HQ/LQ, Press Away, Towards.

Mega Punch (Long)
Hold HF/LF, Press Away, Towards.

Mega Punch (Quick)
Hold HQ/HF/LQ/LF, Press Away, Towards.

Air Throw
Press HF/LQ, in air close to opponent.

Throw
Hold HF/LQ, Press Towards, Down, Away, Up (in-close)

Freeze Breath
Hold HQ/HF/LF, Press Away, Towards.

Ice Geyser
Hold HQ/HF/LF, Press Down, Up.
Eat Human
Hold HQ/HF/LQ/LF, Press Away, Up, Towards, Down.

Fatality

Brain Bash
Hold HQ/HF/LF, Press Down, Down, Away, Up, Towards.

To-Da-Moon
Hold All, Down, Down, Down, Down, Up.

Redemption
Hold All, Down, Towards, Up, Down, Up.

Chaos



Grab 'n' Throw
Hold HF/LF, Press Towards, Away (in-close)

Ground Shaker
Hold HF/LQ, Press Away, Away-Up, Away-Down.

Battering Ram
Hold HQ/LQ, Press Towards, Towards.

Eat Human
Hold HQ/HF/LQ/LF, Press Towards, Down, Away, Up.

Fatality
Cannonball
Hold All, Press Down, Towards, Up, Down-Towards.

Number One
Hold HQ/LQ, Press Down, Hold All, Press Away, Towards, Away, Towards.

Churl
Hold All, Press Towards, Towards, Towards, Away, Away, Away.

Power Puke
Hold HQ/LF, Press Up, Towards

Fart of Fury
Hold HF/LQ, Press Down, Towards, Up, Away.



Primal Scream
Hold HQ/LQ, Press Down, Up.
Stun Roar
Hold HQ/LQ, Press Away, Towards.
Earthquake Stomp
Hold HQ/HF/LF, Press Up, Down.

Neck Throw
Down, Up
Then hold HQ/HF/LQ/LF, Press Up.
Carnage
Hold HQ/HF/LQ/LF, Press Away, Towards, Away, Towards, Away.
Grape Crusher
Hold All, Press Up, Down, Up, Down, Down.

Talon



Run Forwards
Hold HQ/LQ, Press Towards.
Run Backwards
Hold HQ/LQ, Press Away.
Frantic Fury
Hold HQ/LF, Press Down, Towards.

The Slasher
Hold HQ/LQ/LF, Press Down, Towards.
Brain Basher
Hold HF/LQ, Press Away, Up, Towards.
The Face Ripper
Hold HF/LF, Press Down, Towards (in-close)
Pounce and Flip
Hold HF/LQ, Press Down, Towards, Down, Down-Towards.
Jugular Bite
Hold HF/LF, Press Away, Towards (in-close). (Victim must be in a hit reaction)

Eat Human
Hold HQ/HF/LQ/LF, Press Towards, Down, Away.

Fatality
Heart Wrenching
Hold HQ/LQ/LF, Press Towards, Down, Away, Up, Down.

Shredding
Hold HQ/LF, Press Towards, Down, Away, Up, Towards.

Stampepe
Hold All, Press Towards, Away, Up, Down.

Vertigo



Venom Spit (Slow)
Hold HQ/LQ, Press Towards, Towards.

Venom Spit (Fast)
Hold HF/LF, Press Towards, Towards.

Scorpion Sting
Hold HF/LQ, Press Towards, Towards.

Hypnosis
Hold HF/LQ, Press Away, Away (in-close)

Eat Human
Hold HQ/HF/LQ/LF, Press Down, Towards.

Fatality
Towards, Up.

Petrify
Hold HF/LF, Press Away, Away, Away, then hold HQ/HF/LQ/LF, Press Towards, Towards.

Shrink and Eat
Hold HF/LF, Press Away, Away, Away, then hold HQ/HF/LQ/LF, Press Down, Up.

La Vache Qui Rit
Hold All, Press Away, Away, Away, Down, Towards.

Air Teleport
Hold HF/LF, Down, Up.

Teleport
Hold HF/LF, Press Down, Down.

Come Slither
Hold HQ/LQ, Press Away, Away.



Key

HQ - (High Quick) **LQ** - (Low Quick)
HF - (High Fierce) **LF** - (Low Fierce)

PLAY.

Ultra 64, Sony PlayStation, **Sega Saturn**, 3DO,
Atari Jaguar, PC-CD ROM

X•Gen

Samantha Coles
Joanne Guest

Strip
for **Sony**

Next Generation
Giants

Soul Edge
Time Crisis
Dirt Dash



Critcom and
Ridge Racer
Revolution
Reviewed!

&

our models show you
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Agile Warrior:

Spearheading an impressive looking PlayStation assault from Virgin (mostly thanks to Capcom) comes an extremely agile fighter plane sim with more speed and aggressiveness than a typical drug dealer! Play scores.

PLAY+ verdict

Looks: 
 Sounds: 
 Blitz Factor: 
 Value: 

Played 79%

Crash 'n' burn baby!

Desert Strike in 3D anyone? If this thought appeals then Virgin have delivered the goods in stunning fashion with *Agile Warrior: F-111X* – a combat flight sim that requires bugger-all skill to master and places the emphasis firmly on blowing things up. And in this game, you get to blow absolutely everything up!

Set over a series of missions, *Agile Warrior* certainly doesn't set any new standards in flight sim technology – how could it? After all, the PC market has already sealed that area (and they won't let us forget it). No, *Agile Warrior* is the kind of game that looks incredibly hard and complicated, yet once you dive into the hot seat of your flash F-111X fighter plane, the impossible becomes possible and you'll be devastating picturesque landscape with ease before you know it.

The visual impact of the game is generally very hard hitting – when you hit a particular target, you certainly know about it. Then there are the ejected pilots who think they'll simply drift back to the friendly Earth and grab a few scones... ha! No such luck, if you see said survivors in the air, a quick burst of machine guns will ensure that they'll never walk again – literally!

Gore aside, *Agile Warrior* suffers badly from clipping as the nicely texture-mapped landscapes come into view on the horizon, and what the hell were the programmers thinking of when they stuck an unconvincing blob thing supposedly resembling the sun, slap bang in the middle of the sky?!

The FX can also be a tad on the crap side, and at times it sounds as though you're piloting Mr Spoon's Fairy Liquid rocket to Button Moon, but never mind,

F-111X

What made this game for me was the hefty array of weapons and the vast amount of carnage you can inflict as a result. In good old *Desert Strike* tradition, this is a bloody hard game to complete, and despite the useful continual top-up of armour, fuel and fire-power, you'll have to be a bloody top gun and a half to beat these treacherous scum into submission.

Not exactly what we'd call an A-class product, and whilst we can't recommend it whole heartedly, *Agile Warrior* at least offers enough blasting enjoyment and taxing manoeuvres to make it better than *Air Combat*.

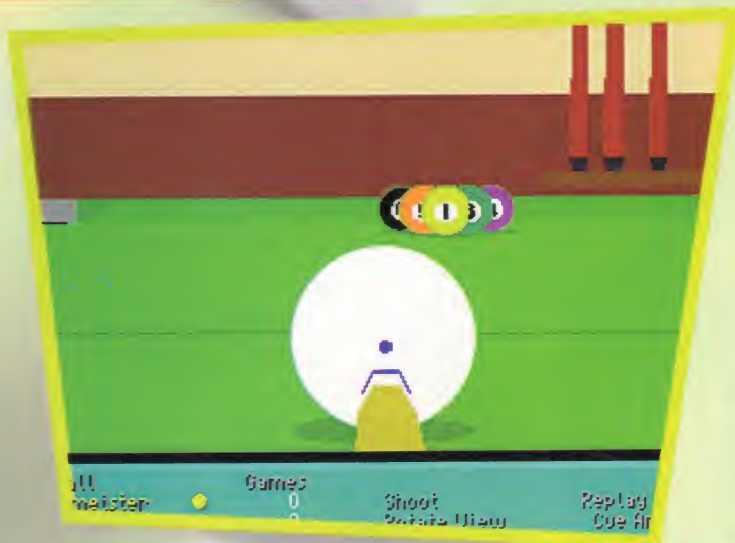
PLAY+ information

- Publisher: Virgin Interactive
- Customer support: 0171 368 2255
- Expected price: £49.99
- Expected when: January



▲ Another unfortunate sod succumbs to your deadly wrath.

▲ This Roger won't be quite so jolly when you start opening fire.



PLAY+ Information

- Design team: Celeris (US)
- Team leader: Matt Findley
- Where at: 60% complete
- Target release: May '96
- Publisher: Interplay Productions

The room is dimly lit and smoke-filled. The silence of the crowd is deafening. The only noise piercing the pub is the sound of the cue being chalked. Cuey Cavey steps up to the table. He sets his stance, spiders his hand, focuses his aim... and shoots. He misses. Bugger. I need a pool tutor...

VRP

Interplay's Matt Findley is a confident man. Just listen to him describe Interplay's latest, *VR Pool*. "Let's say this is the best pool simulation to date. You can do anything and everything allowed in a real pool game: English, masses, banks, kisses, caroms, you name it, it's there." Certainly a brave claim. *VR Pool* is the PlayStation incarnation of *Virtual Pool*, the hit game that appeared on the PC about six months ago. "Up until this time, pool simulations consisted of top down views that didn't do any justice to the real game of pool. Our goal was just to make a game that simulated pool in a way that was both fun and realistic," continues Matt Findley, the game's producer.

What makes this game different then? "*VR Pool* offers what no other pool simulation can. A real-time 360° 3D environment. This means the user can look at the shot from any angle as well as zoom in and out – hey, if you want to see what it's like to be the cue, you can! The physics model for the engine is right on. I can't get into specifics without going physics crazy, but let's just say the banks are spot on. Contact between the balls is perfect, they even transfer spin. I will admit that the masse shots are a

little easier than they are in real life, mostly because you can't miscue and rip the felt, but unless you want to spend the next 15 years or so working on them in real life, you'll appreciate that. And of course you don't have to worry about chalking your cue or bumping into the guy on the next table either!"

Will it teach me to hustle, and consequently allow me to blow smoke rings, pull the chicks, and win lots of money? "We can't guarantee that *VR Pool* will win you fame, fortune and beautiful women, but we will guarantee it to improve your game. *VR Pool* comes with a full money back guarantee that if your real pool game doesn't improve playing *VR Pool*, you can return it, no questions asked."

It must be pretty comprehensive then, eh Matt?

"The gameplay is more realistic than any other pool sim you've even imagined. The fully textured real-time 3D graphics will blow you away, but being able to manipulate the view as you see fit, customising it for every shot is amazing.

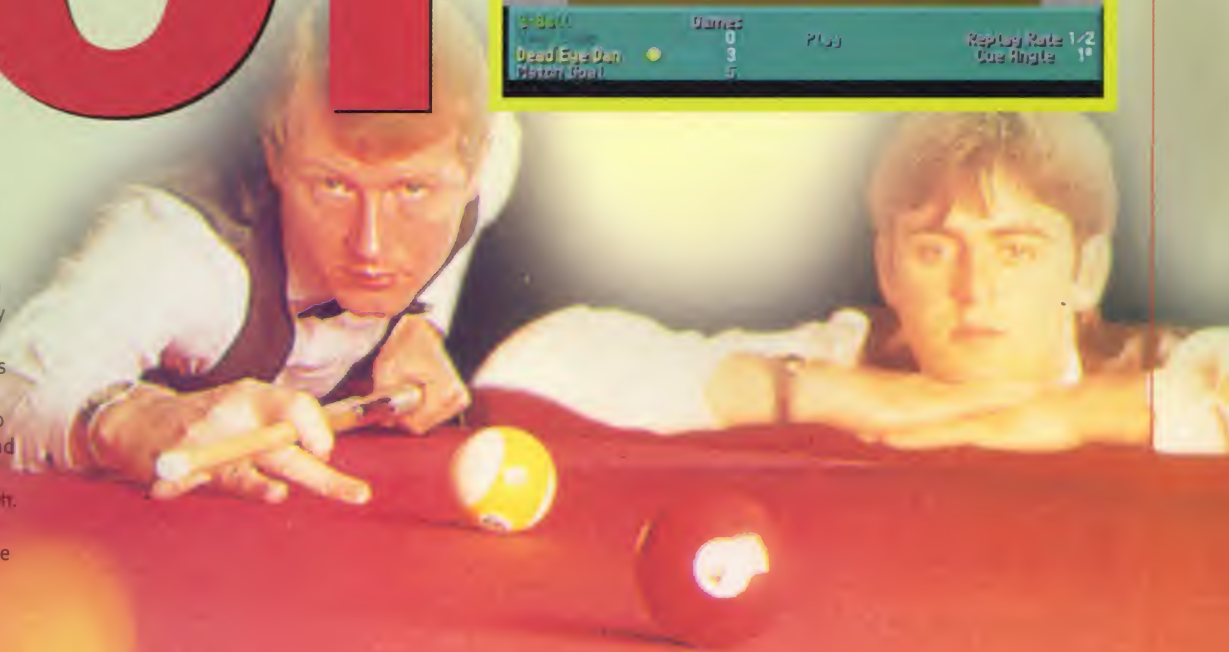
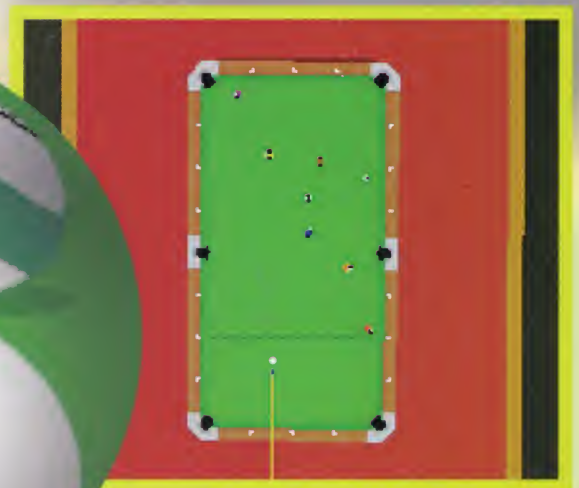
The physics of



OOI

gameplay are so realistic you won't know the difference, and as we said, there is a full money back guarantee if the product doesn't improve your real game. How much more depth do you want?" Err... that'll do I'm sure. Hold on what about fancy trick shots then? They really impress the chicks. "Trick shots?! *VR Pool* not only has full-motion videos of Great Lou Butera doing some of his best trick shots, but it also has over 50 pre-set trick shots that you can load and experiment with as well as a practice/trick shot mode. Satisfied?!?" Oh, OK then.

But how is a game going to teach me how to play? Who can I learn from?





▲ A game of 9-ball. I can practice my break here, and it won't cost me a penny. No virtual beer tho'.

▼ One of the best things about VR Pool is the way you can view the table at just about any angle.

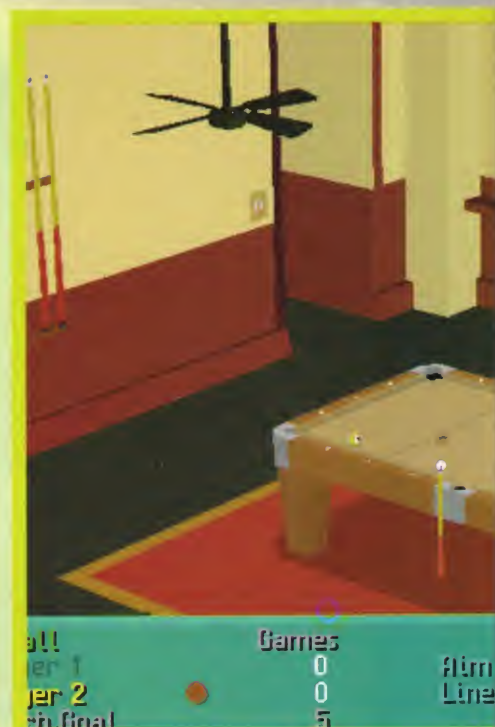


"There are nine different computer opponents, and each plays with a different style and at a different difficulty level. The most skilled player, Dead Eye Dan, is not somebody you want to take on when you're playing straight pool. He's likely to go on a 50 to 100 ball run while you're still waiting for your first shot. For the beginning players, Eiza Crost and Ms. Offen will prove a better match, they're just about as likely to scratch as they are to pocket a ball. In between are a full gamut of players, and each plays their own way."

What other play options do I have then? "VR Pool will allow you to practice by yourself, take on a computer opponent, take on another human player on the same system, or hook up with the link cable to another PlayStation."

What if I've got no friends... don't answer that!

Are you satisfied with what you've done then? "Yes," says Matt smiling. "That is, we wanted to make the best pool sim ever, and we have. We did have to make compromises in the game due to hardware and time, but when I sit down and play the game, I realise that it has



turned out better than I ever thought possible. I figured the game would be interesting and be able to teach the user about pool and how to play. It does all these things, but it's also just plain fun."

Well, Matt, I certainly can't wait to improve my game of pool with your sim. Have you guys got any other projects that are going to make me better at sports? "Sure. Our goal for the present and future is to make sports games that allow the user to be more involved in the game than ever before. The best way we can see to do that is to create the



▲ Not exactly the Sheffield Arena, but VR Pool will improve your game, or your money back! Guaranteed!

► Our designer decided to get a little festive with our very own VR Pool baubles. Very nice.

Pixel-perfect Poolers

For VR Sports

Producer: Matt Findley

Line Producers: Chris Parker and Jeff Barnhart

2D Art: Dave Finley

3D Graphics: Chris Regalado and Rob Nesler

For Celeris:

Production Manager: Steve Chaplin

Lead Programmer: Ras'putin'

Programmers: Matt Soares, Steve Chaplin

Game Design: Steve Chaplin and Ras'putin'

Multimedia Production: Ed Ritchie

What's in a game?

Let's see what *VR Pool* has to offer then. There are 4 different games in all: 8-Ball, 9-Ball, Straight Pool, and Rotation. 8-Ball begins with a full rack. The object of 8-Ball is to pocket all of your assigned balls, or the 8-Ball on the break without scratching (pocketing the cue ball). This is essentially pub rules Pool, where you must pot all your colours and then the 8-Ball. The second game, 9-Ball is racked with the lowest nine balls in a diamond shape with the 1-Ball at the front and the 9-Ball in the centre. The lowest numbered ball must be hit first. Failure to do so results in ball-in-hand for the opponent. The 9-Ball can be pocketed at anytime as long as the lowest numbered ball is hit first. An illegally pocketed 9-Ball is spotted, all other balls stay down. The first player to sink the 9 legally wins.

Straight Pool racks all 15 balls on the table for the initial break. The object is to reach a point score determined at the beginning of the match. Any legally pocketed ball is worth one point. Balls pocketed in addition to the called ball also count for one point. A turn goes until the shooting player misses, commits a foul, or wins the game. A foul on the break is -2 points. Any other foul after the break cost you one point. Three consecutive fouls result in a loss of 15 points. A foul results in ball-in-hand behind the head string. Players must call a ball and a pocket, but other than that there are no restrictions on the type of shot taken. When there is only one ball left on the table, the other 14 are immediately re-racked so that the shooting player never has to take chances on the break.

Finally, there's Rotation pool. This also uses all 15 balls. The object of the game is to be the first player to reach 61 points. The cue ball must hit the lowest numbered ball first. Legally pocketed balls count at their numbered value – thus there are 120 points on the table. A foul results in ball-in-hand anywhere on the table. Illegally pocketed balls are spotted. So there we go. Hold on. I didn't notice a mention of any beer!



Up Shot

Replay Rate
Cue Angle

sports in real-time 3D environments with motion captured players, realistic audio, and all the nuances of professional sporting events. Aside from pool, we have plans for soccer, golf, and baseball titles, all of which should be out for the PlayStation in '96. Farther down the road there are plans for hockey, basketball, even boxing games." Boxing? Hoorah! A fighting simulator that's going to help me beat Prince Naseem Hamed! Matt Findley, I thank you very much for your time. Rack 'em up and I'll get the beers in.



▲ These lines help you work out how to address the cue ball so you can plan your shot.

▼ It's time to pot the black. Can he do it? Bugger. He rips the felt.



9-Ball
Player 1
Player 2
Match Goal
Games
0
0
5
Aim
Line Up Shot
Replay Rate
Cue Angle

Cute and Fury, they ain't

Try tickling one of these hardened bad-asses under the chin and

Gorm

Originating from the barren desert, Gorm is a huge green goblin-like creature who wields a mighty pole (oo-er!). Although his size makes



him a dead loss in the agility stakes, he can acquire equipment to improve his speed in due course.

Delara Zeral

This disillusioned young lass is a dab hand at swinging a sword, and her shield makes it hard to get any good hits in. Her real talent,



however, is in her speed and unnerving tendency to never hang around in the same spot for too long.

Sonork Nezam

This chap is a real tyrant, not only did he murder his brother to become the new Emperor, but he has also transformed himself into a



kind of android that kills and maims without emotion – although I think he looks like a sad Mekon wannabe!

Yenji

Believe it or not, but beneath the cybernetic exterior is a very mixed-up young woman. After witnessing the death of her family, Yenji



became fuelled by hatred and became eager for revenge. Now armed with talons and body armour, she's gonna kick some ass!

PLAY+ information

● Publisher: Vic Tokai
● Customer support: 01604 671415
● Expected price: £69.99
● Expected when: Out now (import)

Critico

Future wars rage in Vic Tokai's first PlayStation venture, and what an exceedingly pleasant trip it is too. Ryan Butt examines the Queen of 3D beat-'em-ups to Tekken's king.



▲ Dayton unleashes a high-powered fireball to try and topple the satanic Exene off of the platform.

► Certain moves in *Critico* allow you to inflict damage on the other player even when they're down.



At last... a beat-'em-up with a difference. For a while now it's seemed like the way

forward has been simply to better the graphics of the game before, rather than add anything constructive to the genre – wrong. *Critico*, the very latest contender to Tekken's crown, has come from out of nowhere with a whole host of appealing features to warp the beat-'em-up genre to another dimension.

Initially, it looks like another *Battle Arena Toshinden* clone, but once you get past the flamboyant special moves and fancy rolls, it takes on a whole new lease of life that looks set to become immortalised in many games to come... but more about that later.

Set in the far reaches of the galaxy on a planet called Hyporia, this story centres around an ancient relic that endowed great powers to those who possessed it – naturally, this meant war.

Two clans took it upon themselves to take charge of this

sacred relic, but neither had the wisdom to wield its mighty power. Paranoid that the relic may be seized from them, the leader of the two clans ordered the complete annihilation of entire races, thus resulting in a long period of confrontation. The fact that nobody knew how to unleash the power of the relic was superfluous – all's fair in love and war and all that.

The result of this almighty clash is *Critico*, a 3D beat-'em-up rich in gameplay, but sadly lacking in characters... there are only eight. However, the troop of strange beings that have engaged in battle are a varied blend of thuggish monsters, sexy maidens and trigger-happy bounty hunters – all with the soul intent of nabbing the relic for their respective race and laughing all the way to the bank.

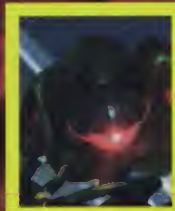
The game kicks off with a splendidly rendered intro sequence setting the eerie scene for the battles ahead. This then slides nicely into the futuristic arena whereby you select your desired gladiator. There, like raging bulls with elastic bands bound tight around their todgers, the two forces lock antlers in a ferocious battle to the death.

they'll probably decapitate you and urinate down your neck! You've guessed it, they're bad to the bone, and I'm sure that you're just dying to meet them.

S.I.D.

This strange contraption contains the mind of a departed Estarian (some strange race) surrounded by a formidable exo-skeleton designed

for warfare. Although S.I.D. looks like a Rise of the Robots reject, it can string together some wicked combos.



Demonica

She may look like a scantily clad maiden with bristols the size of Good Year blimps, but Demonica is, as her name suggests, an evil monster with

cosmic mind powers. In the course of the game, she transforms into a huge demon complete with wings and tail. Urgh!



Sgt. Exene Dulalt

Exene is a lean, muscular femme fatale with a bad buzz-cut hair-do and a tendency to wave batons around like T.J. Hooker (bad 80's US

series starring Captain Kirk). She may look like crap but she's a good character to use because of her wide arsenal of combat moves.



Dayton Trent

Dayton is a ruthless soldier of fortune with a fast wit and a considerably wise "trust no one" attitude. Despite this though, he

spurts out some of the cheesiest taunts you've ever heard. Oh... and he looks like ancient Roxy Music crooner, Bryan Ferry.



m

Unlike other beat-'em-ups, each fight only lasts for one round. But a neat little twist lies in the fact that each competitor has two energy bars (which deplete consecutively) which make for longer, even more intense rumbles.

Each character starts the games with only a handful of special moves, but... and here comes the revolutionary special feature which distances this from any

Learn
new
moves as
you
progress

other beat-'em-up, ever; you can UPGRADE your combatant as you work your way through the tournament!

This means that you actually have the ability to assign more special moves and skills to your fighter as you go on, making the action even more vigorous and gruelling. Having this feature also means that you can gradually ease yourself into each character's combos and move roster at a steady pace.



Of course, this nifty feature would be a complete waste of time if the game was crap, but thankfully it is brimming with rock-solid gameplay and graphics neat and precise enough to give *Toshinden* a few migraines. Sound wise, *Criticom* is jam-packed full of robotic hums and silky tones of the female persuasion – y'know, the kind of sonics you usually associate with futuristic stuff! The whole package fits together perfectly, and although it isn't as compelling as *Tekken*, *Criticom* is still a bloody good game.


◀ Sonork and her twin engage in serious body blows after wearing exactly the same outfits to the contests... like, how petty can you get?!



▲ Beauty and the beast! Exene displays some flash as she battles with a crazed military killing machine. If he was a gentleman he would let her win.



PLAY 
recommended

Looks: 
Sounds: 
Challenge: 
Value: 

Played 87%
Take your brain to another dimension!



◀ Third person and you're sitting in a gun turret...

▶ Shooting away in first person perspective.



New-age techno club? Nope. Perhaps a bit of coffee and internet action? No way Hosé. Asam the Nomad finds out if Cyberia is as cold and barren as it sounds.

PLAY+
information

● Publisher: Interplay Productions
● Customer support: 01235 821666
● Expected Price: £44.99
● Expected When: January

It's wonderful working on a PlayStation magazine, playing loadsa lovely games with glorious graphics and sexy sounds. It's a bit of a shame then that in a few too many cases, today's gameplay is still stuck in the last 'generation'. So how does the last comment apply to Cyberia when it boasts several different styles of gameplay all rolled into one big action-adventure? Read-on...

In this game, you take the role of a post-modern spaghetti-western character, somewhat larger than life, but rather lacking in the charisma department. Zak, your man, has a mission. You must take him through the frozen wastelands of Northern Asia to locate and retrieve the Cyberia doomsday device. Your task is not made any easier by the fact that it is owned by global underworld terrorists. Ho hum. Life's never easy for a guy that always wears sunglasses.

Sunglasses? Well, they look like shades, but they're actually Zak's scanning goggles, and they double as a communication device. I want a pair. Anyway, this adventure has many different styles of play that you must literally battle through. You start the game in a visually stunning walkabout mode,

travelling around corridors and the like, with an over-the-shoulder camera view. As you progress there are other sections where you must man a gun turret or pilot a smart stealth-bomber and destroy various assailants. Oh, and there's also Zak's visor view, where you take a first person perspective and must solve the odd puzzle. Sounds like there's quite a variety...

...but there's not. The main problem with *Cyberia* is that despite being an action-adventure, there is little in the way of action, and practically no element of adventure! It's far to linear. The way

the game has been designed means that there is actually very little you can do that hasn't been predefined for you. From the corridor sections where you have

nowhere to explore, to flight sequences where you only have to aim your guns and shoot at targets, everything in the game seems a little too scripted. If you don't follow the action as you are meant to, you die. Simple as that.

This rather regimented method of play wouldn't be so bad if everything you had to do was logical and flowed well, but it doesn't. Often you find you might want to check out another route on your travels, but sadly there is nothing to see. There are no clues to find, and no 'alternatives' to reach your destination. And, it

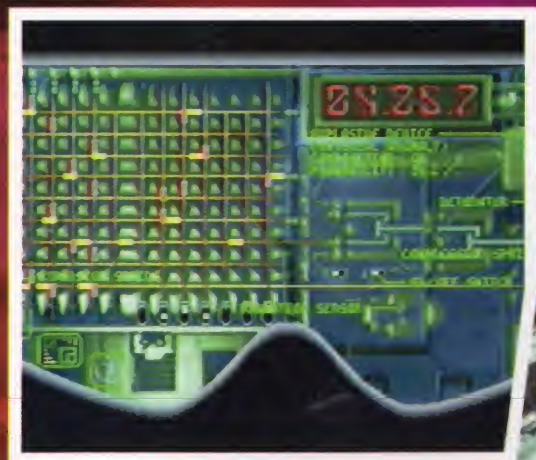
can be as annoying as missing a junction on a motorway when you have to keep going back a stage when you die as a result of your curiosity.

Don't get me wrong, *Cyberia*'s not a bad game – it has been fairly well thought out, but implemented badly. You get little satisfaction from playing as there is no real opportunity to really 'play' around. You'll soon find yourself getting very annoyed at the lack of choice in what you can do. Visually a fluid game, the same cannot be said for the gameplay.

there is little in the way of action



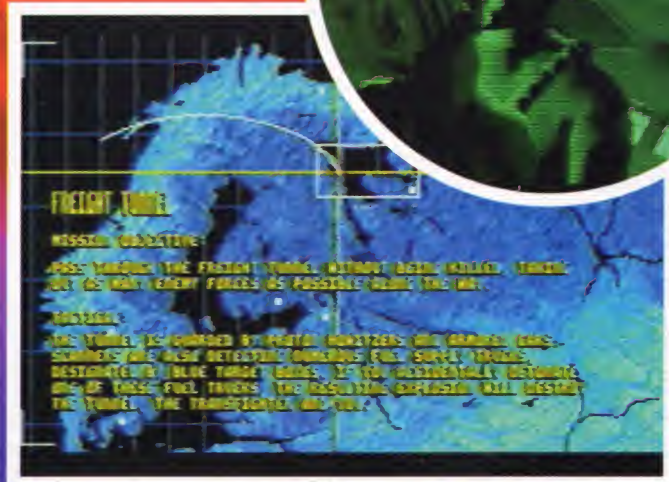
◀ Get ready to fly... or not. Shame this plane behaves more like a taxi.



erria



▲ I didn't want to fly through this tunnel.



PLAY verdict

Looks:
 Sounds:
 Gameplay:
 Value:

Played 67%

Nice game – shame about the 'play'

10 Cold Cuts

Siberia's a pretty darn cold place, but around the world there are some even colder places. These places are sad and err... lonely, and will freeze your little err... bits off if you're not careful. Where are they? Let's go through the round window to find out...

1 My flat's pretty damn cold. My cat tells me so, and she's not wrong.

2 Of course the polar ice caps are cold. A funny white bear told me that.

3 Apparently Mars is quite cold, "Cos it's got no atmosphere" said this little green bloke I met.

4 I've been to some pretty cold parties – they had no atmosphere either.

5 Talking about parties, I've been to some bloody 'hot' ones, but they've been freezing cold, being outdoor all-nighters.

6 It's quite cold in water generally, especially if the water's cold that is.

7 If you let your bath water get cold, it'll be cold in your bath. I hate it when that happens.

8 It's cold in a car when you get into it for the first time on a frosty morning. Lucky I haven't got a car then.

9 It can be little chilly if you stick your head out a car sunroof whilst speeding down a motorway.

10 J.J. Patisserie (local coffee shop) girlies can be a bit cold, let alone the food.

Watch da game!

NFL Game Day offers the player a wide range of gaming perspectives with which to carry out their various gridiron related shenanigans. Here are a few of the better angles with which to watch da game!

Standard view

This is exactly like the *Madden* games, a standard, slightly angled overhead view which works quite well during play... it just looks completely boring.



Close view

This is a bit more like how one would imagine a next generation American football game to look. Big beefy players and oodles of detail. Crunching stuff.



Slanted view

Not a bad approach but this somewhat limits the amount of action visible to the player. This is a good view to use near the endzone, but isn't very effective elsewhere.



PLAY+ information

- Publisher: Sony of America
- Customer support: No UK number
- Price: £49.99
- Expected when: Out Now

Does Europe know that America is racing towards another televisual spectacle that is the Superbowl? Do we care? Opinion is divided, so let's go pitch-side to join Ryan Butt for the full low down.

American football eh? It's a strange old sport. You either follow it avidly like a crazy loony, laughing at Gary Imlach's feeble jokes and strutting around town in LA Raiders gear looking like a prized prat, or on the other hand, you detest it with a passion. Personally, I like the game, but no video game, for me, has ever managed to fully convey just what it is about the sport which makes it so compelling. I tried playing it for real in my earlier years (didn't agree with me... leg ended up like a flippin' corkscrew!), and then there was a whole succession of *Madden* games to plug gridiron on these hostile shores. OK, so

NFL Gam

they weren't bad, but not even *Madden*, nor any other American football game ever allows you just the right amount of freedom to make those plays really count... and unfortunately, Sony of America's *NFL Game Day* also falls short of having the necessary flair.

Now that the PlayStation, and all its power, are here, I want a first-person perspective gridiron game which gives you the freedom to break tackles at will, instinctively look for space and escape to score as well as actually make you feel as though those long passes are being thrown and received... the omission of any of these means that the player will never fully feel in control and get into it properly.

NFL Game Day graduates straight from the old *Madden* school of gameplay... in fact there is only one redeeming feature that I found to prevent it from being an out and out rip off.

I was equally distressed to discover that this... the first ever PlayStation gridiron title plays exactly like a 16-bit game with added frilly bows in the form of the (slightly) enhanced visuals. After a moody intro consisting of marching helmets clashing on a rendered pitch, the player is then faced

with an over-complicated set up screen that, rather than spell the options out clearly and concisely, has each command assigned to a different button – but doesn't actually tell you what does what.

falls short of the necessary flair



► With the next wave of tactics established the players prepare to lock antlers.





▲ Helmet clash – The moody intro is at least some indication that this is a next generation game!

◀ Despite a strong effort from the big Buffs, the Jags get the much-needed first down.

▼ View those magic, match-clinching moments again and again.

e Day

The result of this is that something which was probably intended to give you quick access into the action becoming transformed into a gruelling set up process which can eventually turn out to be completely wrong come kick off anyway. Doh!

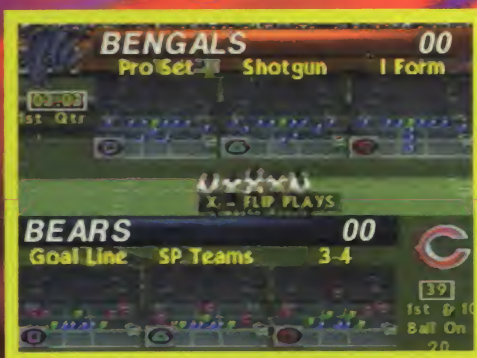
On first look, this game does emulate *Madden* to an unhealthy degree – the same graphics, the same plays, the same audibles. However, upon fiddling around with the controls looking for a 'quit' command, I stumbled upon an option that switches the viewpoints – which did rekindle my interest somewhat. No longer was this game living off *Madden's* success to quite the same extent... and it even offered something remotely new to the genre – cool!

The only feature I could find that was truly unique to *Game Day* was the player trading mode before each game starts. This allows you, obviously enough, to swap team members around just as if they were sets of bubble gum cards. Maybe that's exciting stuff for kids, but it hardly had my pulse racing.

The graphics are slightly more interesting than the content. I especially liked the zoom in effects when a player gets mangled amidst a mass of aggressive opponents – even if the burly players do turn into blocky masses. The sound is a let down, the only atmospheric boost to get you into the mood is a poor rendition of Queen's 'We Will Rock You', and I'm afraid, in the UK at least, *Gladiators* has that one stitched up.

NFL *Game Day* is a basic insight into the normally exciting world of American football, but I certainly won't be satisfied until I can actually smell the mud, feel the crunches, and call my own shots... come on PlayStation, I know that you can do it!

▼ Do you ever get that unmistakable feeling of déjà vu?



PLAY verdict

Looks:
 Sounds:
 Maddenisms:
 Value:

Played 73%
 A decent, if unoriginal, gridiron game

Back to the beginning

There are seven games in all and we've given them each a rating out of ten!

Pac Man: **8**

Galaga: **7**

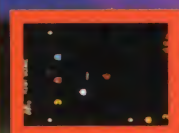
Pole Position: **4**

Rally X: **5**

New Rally X: **6**

Bosconion: **7**

Toy Pip: **8**



PLAY information

• Contact: The Video Game Centre on 01202 527314.
• Publisher: Namco/Sony
• Customer support: No UK Number
• Expected price: £69.99
• Expected when: Now (on import)

With technology in games improving all the time, Namco decided to release seven arcade classics. Play enters a time warp to find out why...

Namco Museum Volume 1

Does it really seem logical releasing seven classic games that were around in the late 70's and early 80's now? Namco have done just this by taking a trip to their sealed vault in Japan and dragging out seven of the best for a PlayStation conversion.

The collection includes the ever popular and regularly updated *Pac Man*, shooters *Galaga* and *Bosconion*, the cute *Toy Pip* plus racing games *Pole Position* and *Rally X*. You might be thinking 'Oh, wow! Great', but when you consider how many other classics they could have fitted onto a CD one question springs to mind. Is this worth a staggering £69?

It really is wonderful though, watching the older members of the Play crew get emotional over all these ageing titles! (watch it - Ed.)

Once you've chosen your game, you delve into a black hole of nostalgia that just keeps you firmly stuck inside. Load up *Pac Man* or *Galaga* and there's just no

turning back! Of course all the graphics and sound effects are pretty ancient now, but Namco have tried to spice things up a little with brilliant animated intro sequences and a 3D games museum to walk around.

All the aspects of each arcade machine (apart from the bloody massive cabinet) have been included. The controls are extremely simple with the D-Pad controlling your individual sprite and one or two of the other buttons for the firing or accelerating.

If you like games that look simple but are a really tough challenge then this compilation could appeal, otherwise you probably won't be interested.



PLAY verdict

Looks:
 Sounds:
 Originality:
 Value:

Played 70%
Just a bit dated!



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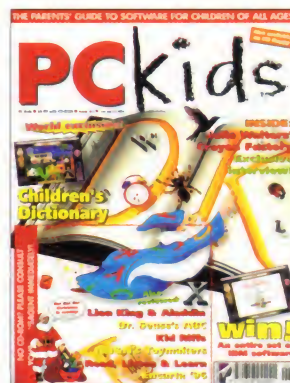
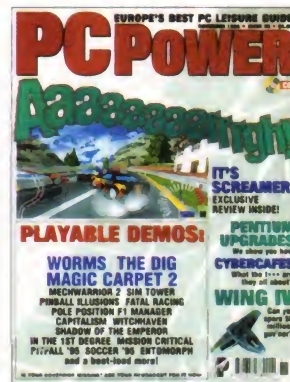
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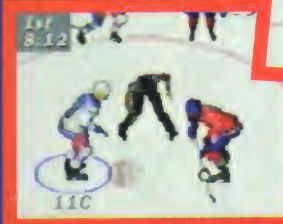
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NHL Face Off

PLAY information

- Publisher: Sony of America
- Customer support: 0151 2823333
- Expected price: £54.99
- Expected when: Out now



▲ A goal has been scored, and these are the blokes that scored it.



▲ A dangerous place to give away a penalty, if New York get the puck here they're in a prime scoring position... or something.



The cream of console ice hockey has always been Electronic Art's forte – and as the old saying goes (well... one I just made up anyway), if you can't better the best... don't bother. *NHL Face Off* is a typical clone of the EA series. Same perspective, same controls and even the methods of scoring are the same. In fact, apart from some mundane zooming-in effects for the puck-offs (I beg your pardon?), this could just be a standard, no frills 16-bit ice hockey game.

It would appear that Sony of America are starting up their own sports franchise to steal a piece of EA's limelight – and in the process they're blatantly ripping-off their rival's product. We've already had *NFL Game Day* which was basically *Madden* without the fat man, and now this. Is something going on that we don't know about? In its own right *NHL Face Off* simulates the sport quite well, although there's none of the typical fancy traits that EA pride themselves on – y'know like commentary, presenters and suchlike. If you can't wait for *NHL '96* then this is a reasonable substitute, just don't expect too much excitement.



▲ Only the goalie and a disorientated defender to beat.

Played 78%
NHL '96 without the, er, '96

In The Hunt



▲ Looks like you interrupted some bloke's kip, prepare to scarper sharpish!

PLAY information

- Publisher: Irem
- Customer support: No UK no.
- Expected price: £64.99
- Expected when: Out now



Soon to be released officially as THQ's first PlayStation product, *In The Hunt* is a frantic submarine shoot 'em-up featuring everything you could ever possibly associate with the sea on the attack, and plenty more besides. Initially it looked very dubious, but fancy appearances aren't the be-all and end-all of modern society, and keeping with that philosophy *In The Hunt* more than compensates for the rough exterior in the thrills department.

► Some of the crafts you encounter in this game are just utterly unconvincing.



▲ Two monstrous subs home-in on your pathetic vessel.

You're not given long to find your bearings before the enemies start piling on the pressure, and when it starts take a deep breath because it's the last chance you're gonna get. Armed with horizontal and vertical missiles plus a whole host of potential power ups, your sub can cope pretty well with the onslaught which includes both water and air attacks. OK, so the enemy vessels range from the lucrative to the bloody bizarre, but this is prehistoric frenzied action, man! The two-player mode is pretty good if you can tolerate your partner pinching your power ups (which I couldn't!), but it's still a age-old format which has been done far better before. If you've just beamed down from the far reaches of the galaxy and are therefore unfamiliar with this type of game a good time is sure to be had, if not then perhaps it is best avoided.

► The first boss is some kind of alien construction. Artistic license? Surely not.



Played 69%
We've sprung a leak cap'n!

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The barmy army

Stand by to repel borders – the tin-heads are coming at us in full force, and there are far more to contend with this time round.

Salvo

Exterminator droid who wields twin machetes, a laser, plus flame-thrower.

Special moves: Flame-thrower, laser, projected machetes.

Super special: Gargantuan fire-throw.

Termination: Cremation.

Chromax

A heavy duty saboteur droid with freezing capabilities.

Special moves: Freeze bolt, flying head flash bite, insu-slam.

Super special: Jet freeze attack.

Termination: Creuphagous body dispersement.

Cyborg

Recycled, revamped and re-energised for action, the Cyborg is back for another stab at victory.

Special moves: mid-air fireball, slam barge, flying uppercut and fireball.
Super special moves: Multiple hit combo.

Termination: Metastasis.

Crusher

As its name suggests, this is a purpose built robot for crushing things.

Special moves: Spinning claw thrust: horizontal, vertical and diagonal.

Super special: Acid geyser.

Termination: Total dismemberment.

Deadlift

The supervisor's first offspring – a hardened mummy's boy.

Special moves: Projected scabbard assault, spinning scabbard assault, cleansing fire.

Super special: Multiple 'cleansing' hit combo.

Termination: Detonation.

Detain

A military police droid who fully intends to uphold the law.

Special moves: Intercept thrust, stun beam, headbutt, spinning claw.

Super special: Laser eyes.

Termination: Capital punishment.



Rise

The first was a hazardous 'black spot' on the beat 'em-up motorway to be avoided at all costs. But now Mirage's robots are being resurrected with promises of gameplay to match the quality graphics. Ryan Butt and Ian Lynch lead the sceptics into attack, only to end up being pleasantly surprised.

PLAY information

- Design team: Mirage in-house
- Team leader: Andy Clark
- Where at: 90%
- Target release: February
- Publisher: Acclaim

Rise of the Robots emerged on a multitude of games machines late in '94 when the beat 'em-up genre was surging into overdrive. After the instant success of *Street Fighter II*, and games such as *Mortal Kombat*, every company in the business was eager to grab a chunk of the action – whatever the costs. The resulting (inevitable) catastrophe was a whole chain of unplayable turkeys too numerous to mention, but one will always be remembered in the malicious minds of game journos forever – *Rise of the Robots* (God, I can feel my stomach erupting into uncontrollable spasms just thinking about it!). After the wave of hype surrounding the game, the



2 Resurrection

final result could never be as good as the producers needed it to be – and in actual fact it turned out to be far, far worse. Since the ravenous pack of wolves (i.e. those members of the games industry press not dazzled by the pretty face of PR) got their teeth into it and proceeded to rip it to shreds, *Rise of the Robots* become the yardstick for measuring every bad beat 'em-up that emerged in its wake. Familiar sentences such as “this is really crap... but at least it isn't as bad as *Rise of the Robots*” or “this makes even *Rise of the Robots* look like *MKII*!” crept into magazines the world over. In short, *Rise* was probably the most famous fighting game to hit the streets since *Street Fighter II*... but not for very flattering reasons.

This adverse reaction only fuelled the passion of the game's developers, Mirage, making them determined to produce something which would shut the critics up and resurrect the growing



Resurrection interrogation

The sheer crapness of *Rise 1*? Resurrection's potential? We unleashed a torrent of questions on Mirage to find out what the programmers and marketing types have to say about this 'hot' new product, and why lightning, for once, won't be striking twice.



Play: Why did you think some reviewers were so harsh on *Rise of the Robots*? Did you feel it was fair comment? If not, why not?

Julia Coombs (Marketing Manger): Some comments were fair and others weren't. *Rise 1* was designed originally for the PC CD-ROM market which was an ideal platform for it. When the game was launched, the CD-ROM was relatively new, and *Rise of the Robots* was the product to show off the new hardware. This was borne out by the many high reviews scores and the sales which reached over 150,000 in Europe alone. The harsh reviews were mainly addressed at the console versions which, in development terms, were like trying to pour a pint into a half pint pot. They couldn't show off all of the really good aspects of the game but instead were only able to offer a limited product to a beat 'em-up wise market.

Taken individually, some of the criticisms were fair and some weren't, but we certainly learnt from them.

Play: Why do you think reviewers thought it all went wrong?

JC: I think those who thought it did go wrong, did so because their expectations were so high that nothing could possibly match them. It was strange because we were getting reviews of over 90% and then suddenly there was one at under 10% – how do you explain that? I guess some loved it and some hated it – that's life.

Play: Was there anything you were planning to include in *Rise 1* that had to be dropped to hit your publishing deadline? Has it been included in *Rise 2*?

Andy Clark (Senior PlayStation Programmer): Not so much dropped to hit our publishing deadline, but it was more that there were things we wanted to do that, at the time we thought were impossible. For instance, getting different sized characters to jump over each other. We're much more experienced now with a bigger team behind us, and that's allowed us to address the limitations of *Rise 1* and add so much more and beyond in *Rise 2*.

Play: It's a few months on from finishing *Rise*, you're planning *Rise 2*, what are the problems you face and what do you decide to do first? How do you then implement your solutions?

AC: The first thing we did was read every word written about *Rise 1* and take everything on board. We also put into place a market research programme which consisted of focus groups which gave us an honest view from the people that matter. One of the key things we then did was to employ more in-house development people so that all formats would be based at Mirage. Having collected all the information and prioritised the things that we wanted to do, the most difficult thing for me as a programmer was to work out how I was going to fit in all our ideas within the given time.

Play: How are you going to win people over who were disappointed with *Rise 1*?

AC: Give them *Rise 2*.

workstation

War

A titanium killing machine that poses a formidable threat.

Special moves: Snap kick, barrel roll, grenade lob.

Super special: Grenade strike.

Termination: Incineration.

Suikwan

A Samurai robot with a particularly sharp, metal-cutting sword.

Special moves: Flying kick, projected purification sword attack, chi-sphere, slide assault.

Super special: Battledress spin attack.

Termination: Spontaneous combustion.

Griller

Vanquisher of buildings – a walking earthquake.

Special moves: Somersault kick, plasma pummel attack.

Super special: Foundation crumble.

Termination: Pagger to the bone.

Lockjaw

A sturdy loading droid, looking to off-load a little frustration.

Special moves: Dual hydro kick, head swipe, missile launch, headbutt.

Super special: Multiple missile detonation.

Termination: Electrocute and fry.

Loader

As before, only with bigger arms and a lot more frustration!

Special moves: Electrical ground wave, headbutt.

Super special: Electric ground spikes.

Termination: Ignition.

Prime-8

The strongest of the bunch, and now doubly psycho!

Special moves: Ground smash, plasma swan dive, plasma punch, plasma somersault.

Super special: Pinball attack.

Termination: Plasma pummel.

Rage

An evolved version of the Supervisor, see name for temperament!

Special moves: Slide kick, flying uppercut, swan dive.

Super special: Lightning meteor strike.

Termination: Deform.



reputation the Congleton-based firm had begun to enjoy thanks to the pre-release hype for *Rise* it generated. As Andy Clark, senior programmer in charge of the PlayStation version of *Rise 2*, says "Obviously the criticism hurt, but it wasn't quite as dramatic as you make out. *Rise 1* got a load of review scores over 90% (Jesus! Some reviewers were that gullible? – Ed) it also sold over a million copies world-wide and

it was still in the top ten of the Gallup charts a year after it was released. So it hasn't been quite the doom and gloom you suggest. However, you're right that it did have critics and some of the comments were a kick in the nuts because we'd sweated blood and guts over it." Now the teams have reassembled for another stab at the critical success that was so savagely denied to them on their first *Rise* outing. With new technology at their fingertips and radical new ideas flowing harder than Niagara Falls after the monsoon, the chaps at Mirage are back, and this time it's no more Mr. Nice Guy.

I am the resurrection

Producing a sequel to *Rise of the Robots* is no easy task – not because it was so good that improvement was hard to come by, quite the opposite. No, after the massive thumbs down that greeted the original, creating a sequel was like waiting for a safe moment to enter the lavatory after your flatulent mate had just been in to empty his bowels after a particularly heavy vindaloo bout the night before! Mirage are determined to get it right this time around, and maybe they have cracked it.

Despite the many faults lurking in *Rise of the Robots*, only a fool would have knocked the visual appearance of the game – it was exceptional. And for the follow up,



► More characters, more moves, does *Rise 2* sound good or what?





Play: What makes a good beat 'em-up? Which past beat 'em-ups do you think broke new ground?

AC: It's the whole package: variation of gameplay – opponents and moves, its feel, looks, responsiveness, challenge and depth of gameplay.

The first ones and the ones that took beat 'em-ups to the mass market, in my opinion are: *Way of the Exploding Fist*, *International Karate*, *Street Fighter* and *Mortal Kombat*.

Play: There's no question the graphics were smart in *Rise 1*, have you improved them, if so, how?

Sean Naden (Senior Graphic Artist): *Rise*

2 is bigger and better than *Rise 1* in every way, which includes

graphics. For a start there's so

much more of them. To my mind the most obvious graphical

improvements are in the individual characters and the in-game

backgrounds – of which there are four times as many. Both are much

more detailed and therefore more realistic. Our experience now means that there's been less trial and error and more of getting it right first time.

Play: Crunch time, what's been done to improve the gameplay?

AC: The AI system has been re-written to new heights by implementing a complex database of information. This allows the robots to react realistically to different situations by picking from a huge amount of attacks, counters and responses. There's also four times as many characters, hidden levels, weapons, projectiles, special moves, super special moves, combos, termination moves, dismemberment... shall I go on?

Play: On the same lines, one of the original problems noted here was the sluggish speed and unresponsive control system of *Rise 1*. How are you addressing these problems for *Rise 2*?

AC: We've changed the emphasis on what number of frames of animation are given to what moves. For instance, attacking moves require less emphasis on smooth motion and more on speed, which increases the responsiveness.

We've also removed the power-up bar which was included in *Rise 1* to accommodate the limitation of the Amiga only having one button.

Play: How difficult is it to come up with original special moves? Have you been influenced by any other beat 'em-ups? If so, which ones?

Matt Smith (Animation Editor): As far as coming up with special moves is concerned, it's been made easier because they're robots, so that gives us scope to do much more weird and wonderful things than if they were human characters. For instance, one of them throws his head at you! The fact that we designed the characters ourselves also helped, because we designed them with specific moves in mind.

The market research program involved studying other beat 'em-ups and we've also played them ourselves as well. It's important to look at the competition and we've been influenced in terms of incorporating the best elements from each.

Which ones influenced us? As many as we could get our hands on!

Play: What has working on the PlayStation allowed you to do that couldn't be done in *Rise 1*?

AC: Having programmed the Amiga version before, the PlayStation has given me much more freedom and flexibility to ensure that all of our ideas can be included.

Play: Having seen where you are at the moment, we think you'll do a lot better with *Rise 2*. Why do you think it could be a smash hit?

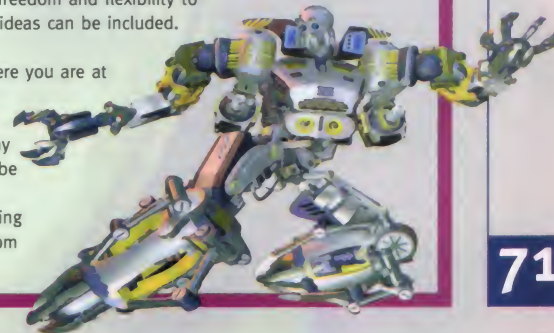
JC: Because we're getting comments like that from people like you!

Mirage have really let themselves run wild on producing gameplay to match. *Rise 2* offers the player 18 (that's eight-bloody-teen!) selectable mechanoids to battle with from the start. That's like, 17 more than the original! There's more though, locate and beat a further ten hidden droids and they'll be added to the already bulging tally of metal-heads for you to chose from.

The game is a straight forward continuation from the first saga. After defeating the Cyborg, the Supervisor promptly sucked him dry of his intelligence and used it to help create an advanced army of heavily-armed robots. She wants to break out of the confines of the factory and seize control of Metropolis 4, and, eventually, the world.

Knowing full well that the Cyborg cocked up his task of wiping out the power-

crazed metal bitch, the Electrocorp Company have decided on a new tactic. The world's last chance merchants have fed a virus into the factory computers while the robots were plugged in (or on-line if you want to get technical about it). This potentially damaging bug, known as the Anarchy Virus, has caused the Supervisor's deranged barmy-army to become so mixed up they've gone to war with each other. The virus hasn't affected the Supervisor though, she's mental enough already, and so the Electrocorp Company launched plan 'B'. Sensing that the brain patterns of the Cyborg were still present in the factory's computers, the hackers fed in an alternative program to protect him from the virus. Now in metaphysical form (i.e. plain old data), the Cyborg can



workstation

Rook

An elite sentry guard droid that never leaves its post.

Special moves: Projected jet attack, ice ball, multiple kick.

Super special: Fireball rain.

Termination: Supernova.

Steppenwolf

A heavy artillery unit that is born to be wild!

Special moves: Cannon armour pierce, dual gunfire.

Super special: Napalm strike.

Termination: Pulverisation.

Assault

A robotic assassin that strikes from the air.

Special moves: Projected jet kick, blade swipe, chainsaw.

Super special: Blade swipe attack.

Termination: Internal inflation.

Vandal

In a clap of thunder, this lethal droid will bring new meaning to the term 'buzz cut'!

Special moves: Buzzsaw attack, chainsaw attack.

Super special: Acid spit.

Termination: Anti-matter shatter.

V1 Hyper

A-class wacko more like – the Queen of all things evil.

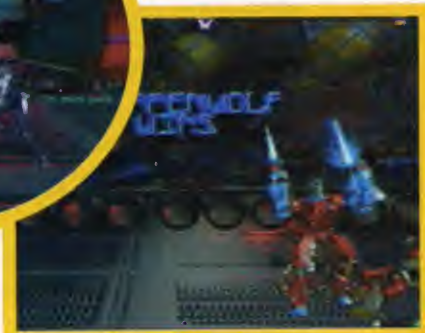
Special moves: Double kick, head whip, double foot kick, slide attack, acid ball.

Super special: Snake ball.

Termination: Disfigurement.



◀ The Cyborg now comes equipped with a neat dragon-punch type move.



now download himself into the memory banks of any of the Supervisor's crackpot

henchmen. However, out of the 18 different types, it's your job to suss out which is the worthiest of the formidable task

of battling it out with the Supervisor to regain control over the factory. In other words, in both one and to player modes, you choose from 18 to do the fighting with. But it's a neat tale, so excuse the indulgent waffle.

Move over

Each of the robots on offer now boasts a belting array of special moves which are a damn sight more accessible to the player than the ineffective, yawnsome crud featured in the first game. There are also exciting new 'super special' moves to find and master plus devastating 'termination' fatality-type finishing moves. Not to mention the host of combo sequences that have been bunged into the mix. Suddenly, you have the right to feel excited by the robots once again... let's just hope they can put in the gameplay extras they're promising to do before deadline time comes around.



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Didn't we have a luverly day, the day we went to

Namco. La, la, la, laa...snip! Yes the *Play-boyz* have been out on patrol this month, and we decided to give it some large in London. We went to check out the latest arcade action at the cabinet-crazy Namco Wonderpark. Asam KV reports.

Play in Wonderland

Tekken 2



As the old saying goes – the best just got better, and *Tekken 2* blows away all competition with its rapid, frenzied gameplay and drop-dead gorgeous graphics. Since the original broke new ground with its easily accessible control system and super smooth charm, this brilliant follow-up features two brand new characters, amazing new backgrounds, and original new moves for each of the existing combatants. There is also the possibility of boosting the ten-character tally to an incredible 25 if



you can seek out the secret codes to access new opponents hidden deep within the circuitry.

Tekken 2 is an amazing improvement over the original, and looks set for a PlayStation release towards the end of 1996.

The PlayStation is a lucky machine really. It out-specs any other console currently on the market, and even looks good with its understated, but cool, grey shell. But lucky? Yup, our mean little machine is damn lucky, for it is the only machine that'll have near-perfect conversions from that king of arcades, Namco, at least six months before the rest. Doesn't that make you happy? It sure does us, so we at *Play*, decided to take a jaunt down to the Namco Wonderpark in London to marvel over some of the forthcoming delights that will be hitting the PlayStation. First a little about the wonderful world of Namco...

The Namco Wonderpark is based in the heart of London, just off Piccadilly Circus. It opened on July 22nd 1995, and has had over 100,000 visitors passing through its doors over the last six months or so. Recently, it's been home to the likes of *Soul Edge*, *Dirt Dash* and *Time Crisis*, but they are yet to overtake the leaders in the overall popularity stakes. Those currently getting the most play are:

1. Alpine Racer
2. Ridge Racer FULL SCALE.
3. Time Crisis



How do they do that?

When the Namco boys come up with a new game, all models make their European debut at the Wonderpark simultaneously with going on test in Japan. The games go on test in London for anywhere between

a month and a year depending on how popular they prove to be. During this playtest stage, one machine out of each of the games is fitted with a special analysis program which measures how often

people use the machine, and which characters and options are the most popular. The firm then takes it back to Japan and reworks the game on speed, animation and looks until they have what they consider a perfect game. For instance *Tekken 2* version B had more

characters added (making 11 in total). This process is repeated until Namco gives the project the green light or scraps the whole thing completely. Assuming everything is OK, finally, a full production model then reappears in the arcades between two and three months later. Hoorah!



Time Crisis

If racing, skiing or even fighting games aren't enough for developing your hand-eye co-ordination, then check this one out! *Time Crisis* is a shooting game, where you take charge of a gun and basically shoot. Shoot, SHOOT! There are two modes, the story mode where you must rescue the President's daughter, or the frenzied time attack mode where you go all out and just KILL!

What makes this game even more innovative is an 'action pedal' which allows you to play more tactically, to duck away and reload when necessary. Great fun.



According to Peter Ruffle, the Centre Manager, the biggest revenue generator is the rather superb *Ridge Racer FULL SCALE*. And when you see that sit-in car and that wrap-around screen, it's not hard to see why! Namco actually has two Wonderparks, the second is in Sheffield. The good news is that they're currently scouring the country for suitable sites ready for expansion next year.

The London site that we went to is home to 170 different cabinets split into four areas – the motor section, sports and driving games, a redemption section (you pay for tickets to use instead of coins) and the superb 'Die-Hard' arena which is packed full of beat 'em-ups. So, enough about the place, save to say that the Wonderpark is pure arcade-heaven, let's get down to talkin' about the games.

Alpine Racer

This game is the business! Namco, undoubtedly the biggest driving force in race games, have come up with an absolutely superb race skiing simulator. There are two race modes: the normal speed racing mode and a technical gate race that involves quite a bit of skilful slalom action.

But the main feature of *Alpine Racer* has to be the control system. Standing on the specially designed interface, you control your man just as you would in real life, by leaning from side to side with your 'ski-shoes'. You can sway, tilt, and slide, and the machine responds just as you'd expect. Brilliant.



Soul Edge



Another fighting game? Sure is, but this one's Namco's latest and greatest offering. With *Soul Edge* the action is plenty, with eight characters to err... play with in a fast 3D fighter. However the main focus in *Soul Edge* is the weaponry. On your search for the ultimate weapon, the 'Soul Edge', rather than having to rely just on your poor hands or feet, you've also got some pretty major blades to hack and slice away with. Great gruesome action!



▲ Here's Ryan & Ian in typical catalogue poses.



▲ Ryan: "Hey, great race man!"
Asam: "Bog off hippy!"



▲ Ian on course for another great defeat.



Dirt Dash



Dirt Dash is Namco's off-road offering set across five stages of multi-terrain mayhem. From Downtown China to Snowland, via Grass, Jungle and Mountain stages, *Dirt Dash* is certainly not short in the variety stakes. There are even three different cars to choose from!

The full arcade machine consists of an air-sprung cabinet to jolt you around as you navigate around a plethora of obstacles over varying driving surfaces. With two viewpoints, and a whole host of neat effects to polish off the game, *Dirt Dash* is a great little racer if you want a change from the standard fare.





Rave Racer

This sequel to *Ridge Racer* features a wide range of tracks, with some incredibly varied scenery and jumps too! Yup sure enough, this wild racer has a rabid range of twisty turns, with hills and jumps that are guaranteed to thrill. Playing this wild 'n' wondrous racer in multi-player mode is most definitely recommended for a bit of high-speed sparring.

As far as we can gather the game is to appear on the PlayStation sometime between summer and autumn this year, but in the mean time check out the review of the awesome *Ridge Racer Revolution* on pages 28 to 30 for a taster of what's to come.



Station Master

Welcome all once again to another jam packed cheats fest! The Station Master has had a bit of a holiday in the States this month, so he's fresh (and with a lovely brown tan) to give you some loving, fatherly help! Many thanks for all of you've written in with tips although nobody, as yet, has found anything that's eluded the all-encompassing reach of the Station Master. Anyway, keep trying! Send your cheats, codes, whatever, to the Mighty Bus Conductor (sorry), Station Master, Play, Paragon Publishing, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth, BH1 2JS.

Battle Arena Toshinden

(PAL) Gaia Cheat!!! Play as Gaia

When the writing moves from right to left on the menu screen press D, DB, B, Square (On Pad 1). You should hear the word "Fight". Now when you choose your character, highlight Eiji and press Up and X. Use the same joypad movements as Eiji to use Gaia's special moves.

Crime Crackers (Import)

Animation Select 2

At the title screen, press U, U, D, D, L, L, R, R, and SELECT. The "START" option will change to "ANIMATION".

Destruction Derby

Various Cheats

Enter your name as the following to get all kinds of different cheats:

- 1) Reflect! : will give access to secret track "Ruined Monastery"
- 2) !damage! : will make you INVINCIBLE to everything.
- 3) Nplayers : will allow you to choose how many competitors.

Go to practice after entering the names.



Warhawk

Passwords

C = Circle T = Triangle
S = Square X = X

- 2 CTTXCCSC
- 3 XTXSSTST
- 4 STXXTCSS
- 5 TCTCTXSS
- 6 TXTSCXCC

Kali mode X O O S X T O T
Thor mode S O S S T X T T
Infinite T T O T S T T X



NBA Jam T.E.

Hidden Characters

(Hold the L1 and R1 buttons as you enter initials/dates)

Frank Thomas	FNK and JAN 8
Larry Bird	LAR and JAN 15
Air Dog	AIR and JAN 21
Jax	JAX and MAR 1

Suns Mascot
Adrock
MCA
Sequoia
Prince Charles
Chow Chow
Bill Clinton
Hugo the Hornet
Mike D
Rivett
Magic Hair
Kirby
Hodgeson

APE and APR 2
ADR and APR 6
MCA and APR 9
SAW and APR 10
CHA and MAY 4
CHD and MAY 5
BIL and JUN 3
HOR and JUN 12
M_D and JUL 1
REV and JUL 6
STH and DEC 8
CHR and DEC 18
HOG and DEC 31



Fifa Soccer '96

Secret Options

First, start the game, then pause it and select the options from the menu. Then enter either of the following codes:

Invisible Walls

Cross, Cross, Cross, Triangle, Square, Square, Square, Triangle.

Curve Ball

Triangle, Square, Cross, Triangle, Cross, Cross.

Super Power

Triangle, Square, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle.

Super Goalie

Square, Square, Square, Square, Square, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle.

Super Offence

Square, Square, Square, Square, Square, Triangle, Cross.

Super Defence

Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Cross, Triangle.

Shoot-out

Square, Triangle, Square Cross, Square, Triangle.

Stupid Team

Square, Triangle, Cross, Square, Triangle, Cross.

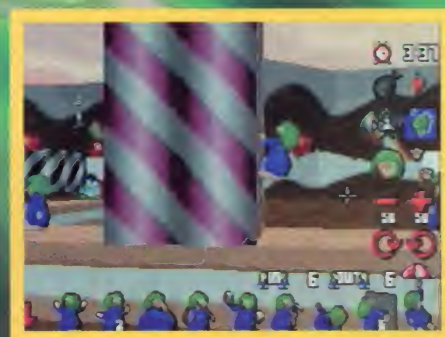


3D Lemmings

More Codes

In addition to last month's codes, the Station Master has scraped up another 20 3D Lemmings codes!

KAMACITE	HOMALOID	MAKIMOND
GUMMOSIS	LALLYGAG	KHUSKHUS
PRODNOSE	BILABIAL	DISPLODE
NGULTRUM	CACOFOGO	RACAHOUT
COTTABUS	METAVURT	ORGULOUS
BEDAGGLE	SLOWBURN	DUNCEDOM
EPICALYX	PELLUCID	



Ridge Racer

Two ships in Galaga

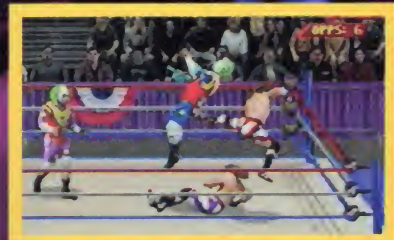
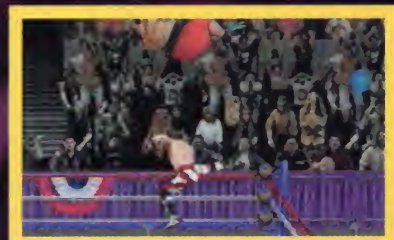
To get an extra ship in the Galaga loading game, hold down the following when the PlayStation screen appears:

L1, Up, Triangle, X. Now you will be able to blast the baddies twice as well!

WWF Wrestle Mania

Power Up

To get powered up in this beat 'em-up then simply hold block and rotate the pad clockwise two full circles starting away from your opponent. If done correctly your wrestler taunts his opponent. If you perform a move within five seconds after the taunt, it will do four times the damage. You can power up only once during the match.



Twisted Metal

Passwords

Warehouse

Circle, Triangle, Square, Circle, Circle

Freeway

X, Square, Square, Circle, Triangle

River Park

X, Triangle, Square, Circle, Square

Assault on Cyberia

X, Square, Triangle, Triangle

Rooftop Combat

Square, Triangle, X, Circle, X

Fight for your Life!

Square, Triangle, Circle, Square, Square



Cyberspeed

Various Cheats

On any menu screen, to show the compilation time/date, on the menu screen, input the following code: Up, Left, Right, Triangle, Circle, Square, Left, Right, Square, Circle.

On ship select screen, to fly as the low press:

Up, Left, Down, Up, Left, Down, Right, Left, Down, Right, Square, X, Circle.

On language select screen, to play all the movies, press:

Circle Square, Triangle, Left, Right, Up, Square, Right.



Loaded



Playing Hints

1) Remember to use the run button to make a fast getaway. If you aren't able to shoot your way out, it's a case of run or die!

2) Save your smart bombs for the areas crammed with blood-thirsty creatures. If you don't you'll end up as a bloody mess on the carpet.

3) Smart bombs don't effect Hunter. You just have to face up to him, psycho to psycho, and compare your big guns.

4) When entering a new chamber, wait at the doorway for the baddies to run towards you and into the path of your mighty weapon.

5) Do not pick up health if you already have 50% or more. You're better to save it and come back to it when you have the need for it.

6) Be careful of flame-throwing robots as they can do a lot of damage up close.

7) Be on the lookout for cracks in the walls. A few blasts from the big flesh shredder strapped to your side and a room full of pick ups will be revealed to you.

8) Use the strafe button to produce a "wall of death". Alternatively, terrify your enemy with your Michael Jackson-style dance moves.

9) A useful method of attack is to strafe backwards and unleash 32-bit death on anyone within range.

10) Don't waste your ammo, only shoot when you have to.....Sorry, I'm not sure what happened there. Of course the real way to play *Loaded* is to run around senselessly, blowing up tables and looking at the pretty lights when you fire at the walls.

11) The end of level one has a high concentration of guards, so get your smart bombs ready.

12) Look out for the secret rooms on level 2.

13) Don't hang around on levels three and four as the monsters regenerate.

14) Get prepared for Hunter at the end of level 5.

15) On level 6, the fuel is hidden next to four mud huts.

16) Be careful not to hang around on level seven because the zombies regenerate.

17) Look out for the hidden rooms on level eight.

18) Get fully powered up for Hunter who is at the end of levels eight and nine.

19) Do not pickup all the power ups at once at the end of level ten.

20) Go to the left side of level eleven first to get the first two parts of the bomb.

21) Find the out door teleporter to get an extra life on level twelve.

22) Be careful not to rush into rooms that are full of robots on level thirteen.

23) Do not pick up all the power ups in the room before F.U.B unless you need them. Wait until you die and then power up again.



Cheats

Go into the in-game options and hold down L1 and L2 for ten seconds. Keep holding these and press the following key sequences:

Health - Right, Right, Left, Down, Down, Up.

Triangle, Circle.

Ammo - Down, Right, Circle, Left, Right, Circle.

Power - Right, Down, Right, Triangle.

Lives - Left, Down, Right, Triangle, Square, X, Circle.

Smart - R1, R2, X, Triangle, Square, Circle, R1, R2, Circle, Circle, Square.

Skip Level - X, R1, Triangle, R1, Square, Circle, R2, R2, X, Square, Triangle, X.

Level Select - Up, Right, Down, Left, Triangle, Circle, X, Square, X, Triangle, Square, Circle.



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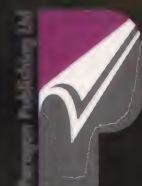


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ALone

Soldier's

Guide To Killing Plenty!

It burst onto our second cover and stormed the ratings with a colossal 92%. Now, *Lone Soldier* is back and kicking more ass than ever before as we take you all the way through the game. Over the next two issues we reveal the hottest fighting tactics and secrets needed to master the game. The bulk of the action is described over the next four pages and next time we'll take you through the climatic spaceship level. What are you waiting for... get killing!

The Jungle

General tips for surviving in the jungle:

- ▶ Tribal statues always get brighter before they fire. Attack them from a distance to avoid their deadly wrath.
- ▶ When attacking the natives, particularly the chiefs, always keep moving and they will never be able to hit you.
- ▶ The watch towers can be quite helpful – try to lead the enemy into the path of the grenades.

Level 1.

Huh! No sooner have you started the game then you're ambushed by soldiers cunningly concealed behind the trees. Study their positions and then, whilst keeping your distance, pick them off one by one. When you come to the steep hill with the gun tower situated at the bottom, grab the rocket launcher from behind one of the trees and destroy the tower from a distance. The rest of the level should be – I emphasise should be – plain sailing thanks to your trusty rocket launcher.



Level 2.

You'll begin this level on the river bank. Use your grenades to destroy the river boats – you'll have to time it so that you throw the grenade into the water and then allow a few seconds for the boat to sail over it. As you walk towards the bridge, there'll be a rocket launcher geezer firing off endless reams of rockets in your direction, get close and then counter attack after dodging each missile. Once safely over the footbridge, you'll come to an enemy encampment. First shoot the soldier next to the water tank, and then turn to take out the pillbox. Now stand a safe distance away from the watch tower and then wait as the enemy soldiers start walking towards you. With any luck the grenades lobbed from the tower by their mates should take them all out efficiently. Hah. Now, simply blast the tower. Around the next bend will be a boat loaded with enemy troops and several foot soldiers – all of which can be easily disposed of.



Level 3.

Things are hotting up. First there's an ambush by concealed troops, then you've got a watch tower to contend with. Once you crossed over the bridge, take out the boat full of troops and then do untold amounts of damage to the enemy encampment just around the following corner. There'll be a rocket launcher bloke – if you get into trouble whilst tackling him, seek refuge behind the pillbox and then attack blast him at regular intervals. Once the camp has been destroyed, dash over the bridge and kill the remaining few soldiers to complete the level.



Level 4.

As we near the end of the jungle territory, the natives are restless – and as a result of your extremely loud gunfire disturbing their strange Gods, they've decided to come out and fight in their droves. This level starts in a familiar fashion with foot soldiers ambushing you from all angles. When you reach the natives, keep on the move to avoid their spears and poisonous darts – you'll find them extremely hard to kill because they're constantly on the move. When you meet the natives, each and every statue from then on will possess demonic qualities – and thus try to steal your worthless soul. A couple of rockets or a succession of shots will exorcise them effectively. For extra kicks, why not torch a few native huts – it's great fun and hey, it serves them right for getting involved!



Jungle Boss

The final jungle level starts out as any other, until you notice some mystic native dude cooped inside a cave. As soon as you stumble into view, he'll wave his mighty staff around and before you can say "Jason and the Argonauts" an army of native zombies will shoot up through the ground. Pick them off as they arrive and brace yourself for the grand finale. A bit peeved that all his henchmen have been vaporised, the mystic witch doctor will then transform himself into a huge werewolf and proceed to either get working with his club or fry you to death with his stagnant breath. If you have any rockets left, he can be easily picked off from a distance. Otherwise, get very close – preferably behind his legs, then simply blast away with your guns. He won't be able to touch you at such proximity, leaving you safe to kill the hairy oaf.



The Canyon

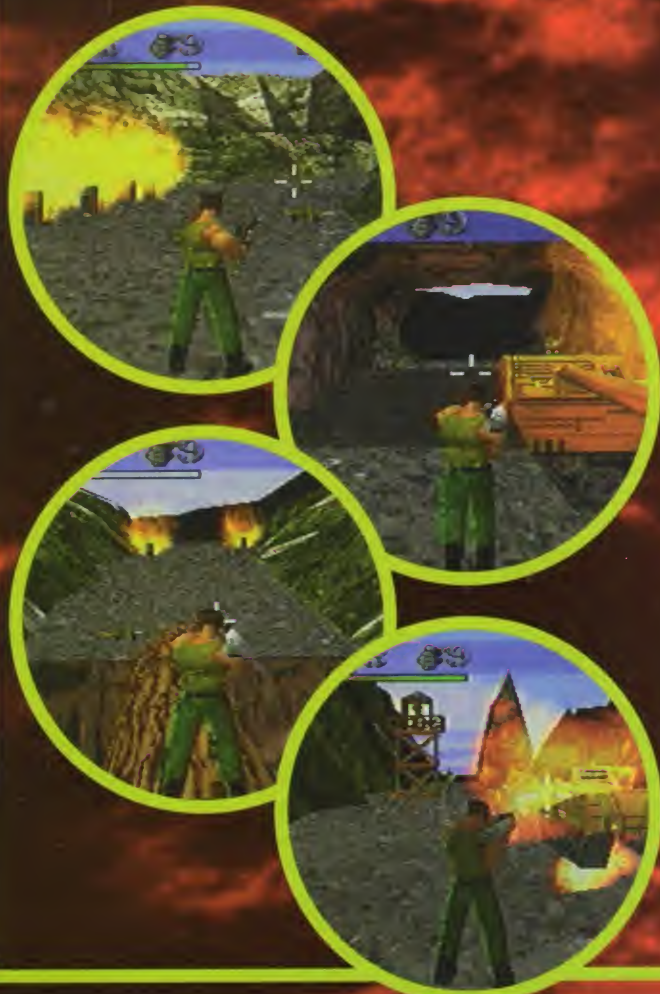
General tips for conquering the canyon:

- ▶ Mortar men can be easily defeated if you get close quickly.
- ▶ The gas grenade soldier fires deadly poison gas, run past the grenades before they explode.
- ▶ The dogs are hard to kill – the best way we found of making them scarpers is to stand still and shoot at them as they chew away at your balls. Just, er, grin and bear it.

Level 1

Out of the jungle and out into the open as you wreak havoc through a picturesque canyon. Start the level as you mean to go on by peppering the foot soldiers with bullets. As you walk over the hill, grab the bazooka and reduce the watch tower to rubble. The next hazard is a tank which can easily be destroyed provided you have saved a couple of rockets, otherwise get close and avoid the gun turret. As you go through the tunnel, prepare yourself for two soldiers that drop down from the other side on a rope. Another tank will attempt to get you as you emerge from the tunnel so be more than ready to rock.

Just around the next bend, you'll come to a log resting across a ravine. Kill the rocket man and then wait on the log. In the distance you should see two oil drums with soldiers coming up behind them. Simply fire off two rockets at the barrels and let the explosions take care of 'em. Up around the next hill is an enemy encampment complete with tank and watch tower. Obviously the tank takes priority in the killing stakes, so get to work. Once past this little barrier, you'll come to a split canyon. Take the right side and then pick off the rocket man and the dangerous mortar launcher as you emerge the other side.



Level 2

When you begin the level, pick off the two foot soldiers that come towards you and grab the flame-thrower behind them. Now use your new weapon to attack the mortar operator. As you progress through the level, you'll come to a big ravine with paths stretching off both sides – take the left route and then grab the invincibility crate as it falls from the sky. This gives you the added strength to overcome the tank easily. Now grab the bazooka laying at the entrance to the next section. As you go around the bend, beware of the cunningly disguised minefield. Kill the lone foot soldier and then use your bazooka to take out the opposing rocket man on the rope bridge. Walk up to his peppered corpse and wait – in the distance at the other end of the bridge, more soldiers should come into view. You've got the rockets, so do your stuff.

As you walk to the end of the bridge, look skyward for the huge helicopter flying overhead, it will perform a fancy turn and then fire a couple of deadly missiles in your direction. Evasive action is vital – in other words, leg it!

Now simply dash to the end of the level taking out the remaining soldiers, just before the exit, you'll come across two grenade-lobbing scum bags on the railway, take them out with a grenade or your uzi – either way they're a pushover.



General Tips

- ▶ Try to kill normal enemy soldiers when they are in the open. They will become more aggressive if trapped.
- ▶ Save bazookas for bosses and bigger enemies (tanks, trucks etc.)
- ▶ Extra health power ups can be left behind whilst you deal with a tricky situation ahead, then simply return for them when the coast is clear. But don't go too far ahead.
- ▶ Learn to use the sight and rotate keys for accurate aiming and killing.
- ▶ The flame-thrower is better for close up attacks but only use very short bursts at a time to conserve your fuel.
- ▶ Attack all pillboxes from the sides.
- ▶ The bazooka is better for long distance attacks but avoid firing it at point blank range – it can be extremely damaging for your person.
- ▶ Shooting trees can cause a fire which kills any enemies using them as cover.
- ▶ Use barrels as weapons, shoot them and they will kill any nearby enemies when they explode.
- ▶ When trying to kill bazooka-armed foes, time the missiles and dodge them, enabling you a chance to counter attack between each one.
- ▶ Play the game as much as us and you won't need any tips.
- ▶ If a zip sticks, rub a pencil on it and it will move more freely.
- ▶ Go away, my head hurts!

Level 3

This level is the ideal opportunity for a mass killing spree. There is nothing much to overcome other than legions of foot soldiers so the key is to go slowly and pick each one off as they appear in the distance. Once you've bagged the first lot, grab the idle M-60 rifle and get shooting. At the top of the next hill is a rocket launcher. Use your heavy arsenal to take out the onslaught of enemy troops as they attack in full force over the next series of hills. Eventually you'll come to another enemy encampment. Hit the tents first, followed by the truck, for the maximum effect and hopefully you'll bag a few baddies in the explosions. The last hazard is a tank. It can easily be destroyed by using the same techniques as before. Get close and avoid his sights.



Canyon Boss

Before you can exit the canyon, there are several last obstacles which must be overcome. Firstly, take out the foot soldiers that hassle you at the start, followed by the devious rocket men. You should see an enemy encampment in the distance by now. Blast everything in sight and then turn your attentions to the pillboxes. The last hazard on this level is the vile scum that emerges from the hovering helicopter. Take out the first two rocket launcher men as you would normally. Then, when the big mean dude drops down, hide behind the pillboxes and observe his routine. You'll find that the safest way to hit him is when he's mouthing off at you. Simply fire short controlled bursts whenever he's giving it some lip, and before you know it the stupid sod will collapse and die a horribly grizzly death.



How to complete Rayman ...and live (Part 2)

Rayman, it's a bastard to finish and no mistake. But you will, we've decided. Here we go again with part two of *Play's* guide to one of the hardest platformers on the Sony PlayStation. This time up we scale the heights of the Blue Mountains, battle through the colourful Picture City and confront the dastardly Space Mama. So, if you need help on any of the levels, look no further than our top quality guide – maps included! Sort it ahhrrt.

Blue Mountains

Twilight Gulch

▼ Mountain Level 1:

Ignore the first pink grabbing loop at the start – go forward and collect the fist icon which enables Rayman to punch further. Jump to the left of the exit panel and fall down. Crawl right underneath the spikes, past the rock monster and a cage will appear. Up above there is another cage. A blue ting is in mid air above a gulf. Jump into it and you will find more tings and a hidden cage.



▼ Mountain Level 2:

The large rocks barring your way can be broken or jumped over. You will come across a narrow cavern with bouncing lava rocks, with Mr Stone above. Break them and go to the right, where a cloud will appear above. Break the rocks again and go to the left of the cavern. Climb up and jump on the cloud that appeared to escape the level.



The Hard Rocks

▼ Mountain Level 3:

Crawl left at the start to find a power up. The blue spiky balls that block your way whilst riding the cloud can be punched out of the way. At the end of the level, jump into the empty space following a trail of tings. Grab the hook whilst falling to swing to the exit.



▼ Mountain Level 4:

Throw Rayman's fist at the protected cage to break it. At the exit sign, kill the hunter and jump to where he stood. Clouds will appear which lead Rayman to an extra life.



▶ Mountain Level 5:

To avoid the falling rocks, hang onto the edge of the platforms and they will bounce over. Towards the end, fall into a hole whilst following a line of tings. Kill the rock monsters at the bottom and get the power up. Clouds will appear to lead you to a hidden cage.



Mr Stone's Peaks

● Mountain Level 6:

Break the rock to free the musician's guitar – he will give you a vial that helps you to fly. After the first photographer, walk and fall down the hole where a cage is located. After the second photographer, fly for a bit and get the power up. Beneath it is a hidden cage. Grab an extra life under the exit sign.

▶ Mountain Level 7:

Cut the frayed areas of the ropes with your flying hair. Cut as much as possible in one spot. Once you reach the grass, fly into the opening where there is a hidden cage.

◀ Mountain Level 8:

Once you have passed the rising water, continue left to reach a series of clouds, which lead you to a cage.

▼ Mountain Level 9:

After a long walk, fall down before Rayman reaches the grass to find a magician. Jump into the next cavern to find a group of tings. After the photographer, jump to the left into the second cavern to find a cage. Punch your fist at the lava balls whilst jumping into the air – this will stop Rayman sliding. Once you reach a series of blue steel balls, jump into the second or third cavern to find a cage.



Picture City

Eraser Plains

► Image Level 1:

Before jumping on the pencils, knock the yin/yang ball and jump onto it. Jump onto the next platform and go right to find tings and a cage. Whilst on the first pencil, jump between the two pencils above to get a power up. Grab it and a platform will appear on the right, which gives you access to a cage that appears later on.

At the end of this level eight yin/yangs will appear. Climb to the left for a golden fist iron. A platform now appears – jump on it and go left to reach the ting, which makes a cage appear on the far left. Retrace your steps until you reach the platform that will take you to the next level.



► Image Level 2:

At the end of this level, knock the yin/yangs to access a free life.



► Image Level 3:

Don't get the first fairy. Grow big to get the first cage. Jump onto the square bouncing eraser and jump onto the moving platform to the right. From here, you can wind up and punch the yin/yang to the left. Return to the bouncing eraser, jump on top of the yin/yang and punch the cage.

The second half must be done twice – once in large size to get the last cage and once in small size to get out. At the end, grab the flying hook and touch the fairy to become small and escape the level.



● Image Level 4:

Space Mama confronts you here! You can't hit her when she shields herself with a rolling pin. When she flies into the air, hit her.

Pencil Pentathlon

► Image Level 5:

At the second group of red pens, drop down between them and grab one of the hooks. Swing over a rising platform, past the hunter and jump onto the bouncing erasers. Knock the yin/yang loose, push it to the right, jump on it and jump across to the next platform. Swing across the flying hooks to find a power up, and a cloud of flying hooks will appear to the right. Swing on them carefully to get to the exit map.



► Image Level 6:

Use the helicopter power to get past the spikes pointing down. Jump over the exit sign and a cage will appear beneath you.



► Image Level 7:

Follow the tings – they indicate a route, which leads to a cage at the bottom of the bouncing erasers. After the photographer, fall down the oily slope to get past everything. Remember that there is a cage in this section. Once you reach the power up, platforms will appear to take you to the end.

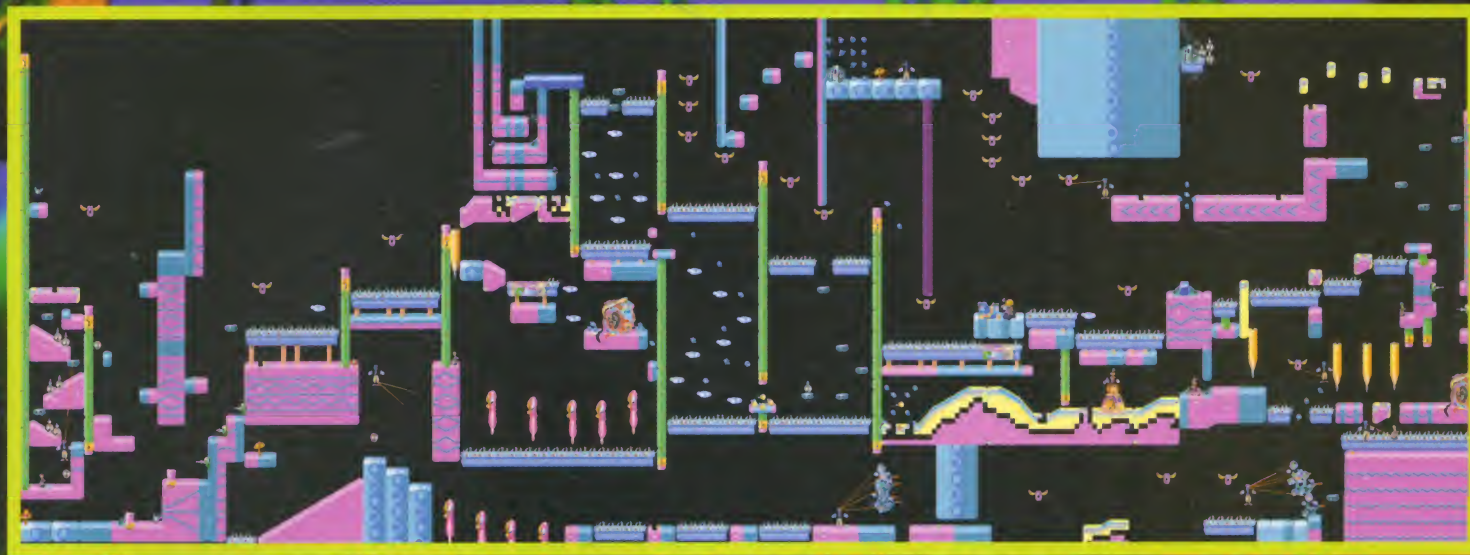


Space Mama's Crater

▼ Image Level 8:

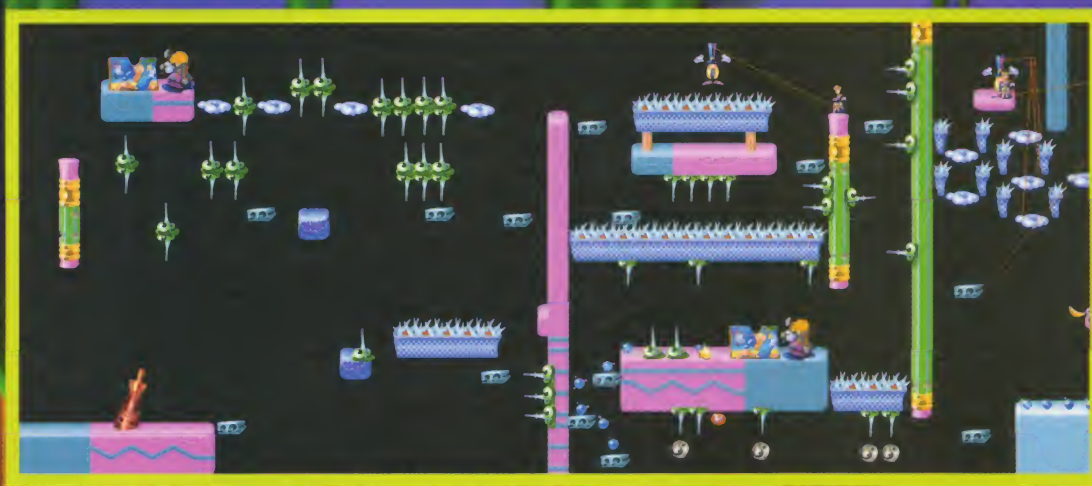
To get the cage trapped between the yin/yangs, swing off the flying hook, punch the yin/yang while in the air and grab the hook once more. Jump over the exit sign to reach a cage.

There are two exits on this level. On the lower level exit, you can't reach the upper level to find the cages. You have to re-enter the level!



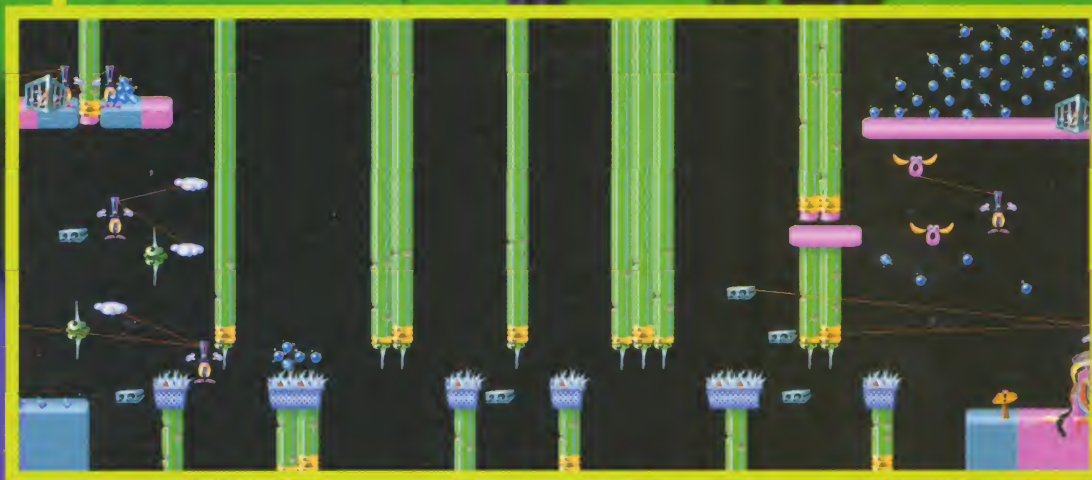
● Image Level 9:

After reaching a magician, go right until you reach a dead end. An extra life will appear on the other side. Go back up and jump down the hole, which will reveal a cage guarded by two hunters. After the photographer, a cage will come into view which is high up. Keep going and slide down a V shaped hill, and from the extreme right, slide back to gain speed. Jump from the left edge to reach a higher level, which leads to the cage. Follow the tings down the middle of the V shaped hill to find the exit.



▶ Image Level 10:

Move around on the platform and avoid the things that block your path. Jump over the exit sign and onto the can of paint. A platform will appear which takes you up to a cage.



● Image Level 11:

It's that big fat Space Mama again! She can't be hit when she's pointing to shoot with her dreaded rolling pin. The washing machine also protects her. When she's behind it, try to avoid the lasers and punch the machine. The vibrations from Rayman's punches will eventually break the machine. The dial on the machine will indicate how many hits it has taken.



Arena



Who says size doesn't matter? Just look at the size of my letters page this month. We are only four issues old and already the local Post Office is complaining about the amount of mail they have to deliver every day. They're complaining? What about me, I have to read and answer it all!

Only kidding, reading readers letters is always one of the coolest parts of this job and I hope that you'll keep them coming fast and furious, that postie's been getting on my tits anyway!

If you want to have your say, or if you have a question you want answered by the country's hottest PlayStation Posse, then write to:

Arena, Play, Paragon Publishing Ltd, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth, BH1 2JS or e-mail me at: dperry@paragon.co.uk.

Dear Dave,

I would like to voice three points regarding the Sony PlayStation. Firstly, after reading issue 2's article on Sony's disc manufacturing, I am outraged by the length of time and lack of information on exactly when *Mortal Kombat 3* is due out. Its release date has been put back four times now.

Virgin Megastore told me it would be out on October 20th and then the 27th. I was then told by PlayStation direct, a mail order company, that it would be out on November 17th and have now been told sometime in December, maybe the 10th. I believe Sony is holding up certain CDs for a special Christmas launch, as GamesMaster previewed *Mortal Kombat 3* in October for the PlayStation. Would you agree with this, as your article made a lot of sense to me.

Secondly, like Richard Bruce from Kent I too couldn't get hold of the AV connection and hence as I have a Sony Nicam TV and video, plus a Hi-Fi, I purchased the scart connection to enjoy both excellent stereo sound and get an excellent picture too!

When I load games, the screen goes black and I can see faint ghostings of TV programmes. I feel cheated by Sony, as, if the official cable was readily available, I would have purchased one. Are Sony liable for compensation, if at some point I

can obtain the proper connection as I will no longer have a need for the previous connection.

Thirdly, I feel that the TV advertising by Sony for the PlayStation is awful.

The latest one which features that 'man' with the glasses holding up a stick, is ludicrous. Compared to the Sega Saturn advert, the Sony one looks cheap, naff, and dull.

If, on the basis of watching these various adverts, I had to choose a next generation game console, I would opt for the Saturn. Why doesn't Sony show off some of its amazing graphics and great gameplay? With games including *Tekken*, *Rayman*, *Destruction Derby* and *Wipeout*, they could create an excellent TV advert. Why not advertise these instead of a stick of wood? S.A.P.S.!!!

Keith, Kingsbury

Yeah Keith, I'm with you on this one. I think sometimes advertising people try to be a bit too clever and, whilst I'm sure the S.A.P.S. ads seemed very cool and trendy as a concept, after a while the joke does wear a bit thin. The best thing Sony could do now is to film another ad with that annoying nerd with the glasses getting his guts blown all over that sickly sweet family by an angry PlayStation owner with a bloody big shotgun! Then maybe have those chimps sliding around in all the gore beating each others brains

out with that stupid stick. In fact, I've just thought of a really cool thing to do with that stick... Get that bloke and...

As for the connection leads for the PlayStation, there is no excuse is there really for a huge hardware manufacturer like Sony to mess up so badly? Software cock-ups you can forgive as it is a fairly new field for them, but for a company that produces millions of hi-fis, TVs and videos a year... tch, tch!

*Oh yeah, and *Mortal Kombat 3* should be out by the time you read this.*

Dear Dave,

Nice to see a page up on the infobahn, but where is the rest? I thought this was supposed to provide some info or summut but all I see is a page of text basically saying "here is our mag." Am I missing something or is this supposed to be like the on-line Amiga mags I am used to?

Reviews on demand is what I would like to be looking at but I realise the time and effort needed to set the damn things up.

Anyway, enough grumbles. I have been an Amiga faithful for three years but want that PC type gaming experience without having to take out a massive loan and so decided on your mag as a start (Issue 2). The reviews were well detailed and very easy to skip over rather than wade

through word by word. I hope this style continues even if some of the screen shots were blown up so much all I could see was a screen full of pixels.

However, your magazine alone will not (ever?) convince me to actually buy a PlayStation. Every single platform magazine writes in the same (naturally) biased style, but what is making me think hard is an article I read (different mag) about FIFA '96. I never was very good at footy games but this looks the biz and the article asked Electronic Arts to give details of what priority the programming was given on every platform. The good news for you is that they graded overall as PlayStation, PC CD-ROM, Saturn in that order for gameplay. This must have hit Sega like a lead weight!

Previously FIFA meant Mega Drive meant SEGA. Word will now spread that Madden's, Hockey, etc., means PlayStation (and I hope that will be true).

Sony should realise this huge potential in EA (and others) and stop hogging the production line. I was outraged to read (true or false) of their greedy monopoly tactics for Christmas sales. As an Economics graduate in corporate strategy together with Sony's refusal to comment I can only really draw one conclusion. Bottleneck my arse! Building another production factory would take too long but do they not realise the market share they could grab merely by contracting out CD production even on a short term Christmas one off? I think they do, but this would mean third party products in direct competition with their own (perhaps they think inferior?) ones. Short term greed always seems to triumph over long term benefit in corporate strategy and it seems Sony are no different. Christmas (and the Jan sales) will be pivotal as to who gets the best start and I just hope Sony are less short term than their other main rivals.

Mark Booth

First off, let me say that Paragon On-line, our net site, is still very much in the early stages of its development. It will not be fully functional until around the end of January but with the time and money that we are putting into its development, I am sure that it will be an absolute stonker and probably one of the best sites on the information superhighway.

As for us being biased, no, no, no. We pride ourselves on always giving a 100% honest opinion. That said though, we do obviously enjoy working with the PlayStation immensely. If you want to further check out our impartiality, why not treat yourself to a copy of our sister magazine X•Gen, which is a multi-format with no real ties to any particular format.

Finally, I think the economic consequences of

Sony deliberately holding back third party PlayStation titles are clear for all to see. We can only hope that Sony are not so stupid and cynical so as to do such a thing, And that they are just a bit unorganised and slap-dash instead. I guess time will tell.

Dear Dave,

This may get longer than I want but please read it all.

Your answer to Simon Harris in Issue 2 was both misleading and more than a little unfair with the dig about buying a Jap/NTSC PlayStation.

You stated that the Japanese machine will only play PAL games in black and white. Wrong.

I had a Jap machine. After booting up with *Toshinden* (using the spring/match stick technique) I could play all the PAL games in full colour. However, to achieve this you must have the official RGB scart lead (some cheaper third party leads give a black and white picture). The only game that wouldn't work on a Jap machine was *3D Lemmings* (also *Wipeout* only plays four of the music tracks, though otherwise the game plays perfectly).

Connecting the composite output to a phono socket on the TV does produce a black and white image though, so I can only assume that this is what you were doing.

I would hope that this was a misinformed error and not an attempt to put Jap PSXs in a bad light.

Also, you had a dig at Simon for buying his PSX instead of waiting for the UK release. I bought a 32X and a Mega Drive last year and had to make do with only three games. New releases after those three were very scarce during the time I had it for (eight months). I sent the warranty away expecting my vouchers for a tenner off my next five games, only to be totally ignored (remember this is an official UK operation). I never got them. So much for buying English stuff.

In the meantime I was offered a Jap PSX with three games (*Motortoon Grand Prix*, *Ridge Racer* and *Jumping Flash*, for 400 quid. I bought it because the UK date was still undecided (the PAL unit finally came out about five months after I got mine). My Jap machine had a limited warranty and no guarantee of running UK games, yet it already had more games available than the 32X ever had. I then bought *Tekken*, three months before its UK release (full screen and no squigging of the characters). It is, in fact, better than the UK version.

Prior to buying the PSX, my friends around me were all waiting the outcome of the Saturn/PSX war. My PSX single-handedly swung them to Sony. The Jap machine convinced them totally and was

directly responsible (through me) for five PAL PSX sales (how many they've convinced now is unknown). I know buying a Jap machine is frowned upon by the retailers, but at the end of the day, we in the UK are expected to wait as much as 12 months longer than the Japanese market, a sad state of play really and little wonder that some of us jump the gun. I must state that I sold my PSX and bought a PAL version as soon as I found out that the PAL machine plays import games with little or no decrease in either screen size or speed (through a scart lead). With this in mind I do not discriminate against Jap owners, nor do I feel should yourselves, after all, it's still a PlayStation.

The next statement was worded very, very carefully.

I was a little disappointed that you didn't give Simon more of a hand with his problem. Pointing somebody to the Internet doesn't help if you have no access to the PC world. A quick description of the PSX architecture and the need of getting it to read a Jap machine from the audio screen before swapping for a PAL game without the machine knowing you've switched discs would have given him all he needed to work it out.

Anyway you're an unofficial mag so why not just tell him outright (mind you, telling him outright might deny you your cover discs I suppose). The reverse of getting a PAL machine to read Jap discs is also true.

To use your own words (Issue 2, page 6) the PlayStation does not belong to Sony, it belongs to everybody who enjoys top quality gaming, we are all partners in this venture.

Finally, a few facts you may find of interest.

A Jap NeGcon controller works with a PAL machine.

Memory cartridges are not inter-changeable between Jap and PAL.

The original action replay works on both Jap and PAL machines.

Action Replay 2 (European version) when plugged into a Jap PSX allows you to use the rapier cheat, then save it back to your memory cartridge in the other port. (This also works on a PAL system). Unfortunately the European replay can't influence the Jap copy of *Ridge Racer* or *Jumping Flash* regardless of what the main system is (so it is worth buying PAL games as well).

Lastly, the church/hall/etc. effects during audio CD playback on a PAL machine are not available on the Jap machine, it can only play like a normal CD player.

David Lord

Uncle Tom Cobleigh and all... I feel you deserve a round of applause. Defensive, moi? Somehow

comparing the PSX to the Mega Drive 32X doesn't really seem fair now does it? And if your imported machine was so bloody brilliant, how come you sold it?

I think you misunderstood what I was saying in Issue 2. There is nothing wrong with buying an import machine so that you can play on a new format before anyone else. Many of the machines I own are foreign because I wanted to be 'in the know' as do most hardcore gamers. But, buying an import machine does bring its own problems, as you obviously discovered otherwise you'd have kept hold of yours wouldn't you? That particular reader wanted to play Wipeout and couldn't, I'd say that was a problem.

You are obviously somebody who has an extensive knowledge of the technical side of gameplay, unfortunately not everybody else does. As for telling the reader how exactly to play import CDs on his machine, Sony themselves expressly asked all magazine editors not to do so. As they are people I deal with on a day to day basis, and also someone who I am hoping to secure a demo disc deal with for you, the readers, I think totally ignoring such a small wish so early on in our relationship would have been more than counter-productive for Play as a magazine.

See, you don't know everything do you?

Dear Dave,

In response to Richard Bruce Kent's letter, Issue 2, on how to connect a PlayStation to "proper stereo".

I have achieved this with the following:
PlayStation Video Out – VCR video in using phono to phono lead.

PlayStation Audio Out (both channels) – Hi-Fi Aux in using double phono to phono.

Now, when you set the TV to the video channel you will get the PlayStation picture. Turn stereo to Aux and voila! – stereo sound.

P. Digby

Thank you P.Digby That's what we want, readers helping each other out.

Dear Dave,

I sympathise with Tich's comments in Issue two regarding running the sound from his PlayStation through a hi-fi and of course had the same problem myself, err, but felt I had to deal with them violently.

The right phono-out wasn't too much of a problem. I simply got a rubber coated lead and trimmed it with a Stanley knife until it cleared the

R.F.U. box. There was even enough space to leave some, well a little, insulation on it! As for the left...

The R.F.U. casing just clips apart. The bare wire ends of a decapitated phono lead can then be attached. One on the outer rim held firmly in place by the casing and the other actually inserted into the centre prong of the connector.

Dodgy I know, but trust me, it works. The plastic casing conveniently has a small hole in it, covered by the top label. Just perfect, with a little persuasion, for running the cable through. That's it, hi-fi stereo PlayStation the way its meant to be.

Warranty!?! I hear you cry.

The first time you hear "Petrol", focused at a point in space somewhere between your ears, you won't give a damn about any warranty.

Kevin Marsh

Er, OK. Not something I'd recommend, P. Digby's way seems better, but each to his own. Anymore? Or are we done on this subject?

Dear Dave,

If you get your cover disc from Sony for your next magazine, won't Sony keep the best demos for its own officially-licensed magazine?

If there is only one plant that make PlayStation CDs, you'd think they'd bring the best titles out first, to sell the console. Not games like *Rapid Reload* and *Novastorm*, the latter was rubbish even on Mega-CD.

How good is the deal with Namco and PlayStation, will they continue to bring out their best arcade conversions?

Yours sincerely,

George Macaulay, Leeds

As far as cover CDs go, we won't be getting them from Sony direct, we'll be getting them from third party developers like EA and Gremlin, so there will be no danger of the official mag having the best for themselves.

Sony control CD manufacturing, which is why we need their permission to produce a demo.

Yeah, some of the games out so far have been a bit dodgy, frustrating innit? Especially when you know there is some really good stuff waiting in the wings. As for the deal with Namco, it's pretty good, after all, both companies have done well from it, but it is by no means exclusive. Namco titles will continue to appear on PlayStation, but they may also appear on Saturn some time off in the future, after all, their main priority is the coin-op side of business.

Dear Dave,

Play is the best magazine ever, and only one thing could make it better, a playable CD, but after reading Issue 2, I now understand why there hasn't been one yet.

I have the two best things in the world, a Sony PlayStation and a Sony Super Triniton TV with Dolby pro logic surround sound.

But when both are linked up the way it says in the PlayStation's instruction book you get with the PlayStation, you only get mono sound. Could you tell me how to get Stereo sound?

Please help me Dave, I'll do anything.

Thanks.

Stuart Bennett, Essex

Arrgh! I had a feeling we weren't finished with this subject! Read the previous letters!

Hi Dave,

I am writing to you to say how disappointed I was to find that the review of *Road Rash* was not in last month's issue as you said it would be. I read in last month's mag that *FIFA '96*, *Road Rash*, etc. were being held up for up to six weeks as the manufacturers can't keep up with the demand for the games. WELL IT'S NOT GOOD ENOUGH!

Could you please give me some sort of indication of when you will review *Road Rash* and when it's coming out.

I was very pleased to hear that you are not going to do so many previews and are going to do more reviews instead. Also, I am very glad that you have got too many good tips and cheats. This is the best mag I have ever read so keep up the good work!

Rob, Orkney

*Well, Rob. What can I say? Electronic Arts promised us the game would be ready in time and then at the last minute told us it wasn't ready. It seems like they are having big problems with finishing it, and I wouldn't bargain on seeing *Road Rash* in a shop near you until February at the earliest. But don't hold your breath.*

Dear Dave,

The Play Back pages are great. I've lost count of the amount of times I've had to search through hundreds of mags, just to find a review of a game. Now I have no problem, all the info I need to see is on two pages, and it's also updated. This is a great idea, whoever thought of it should be commended.

Just out of interest, how many mags do you write for? Do you have a few identical brothers who help you out?

Next time you're on GamesMaster, could you say a big Hi to me?

When, if ever, will Sony release an MPEG adaptor, I want to watch Video CDs and don't want to have to buy a CD-i or Saturn.

I read somewhere that Sony won't be releasing one. I hope this is incorrect. Finally, aren't *Tekken*, *Wipeout* and *Ridge Racer* great!

I love the mag, but the letter section could do with about five more pages.

This is a mistake that all mags make, remedy it please!

Freedom, peace and love.

Gary Sharp

Not a hippy are we Gary? And I'm not too happy that you like the Play Back section because that was Ian's idea, and now I have to congratulate him and he's already a bit full of himself! No really, it is a good idea isn't it? It makes comparing software so much easier, and the fact that it is regularly updated means it never goes out of date.

As for me personally, I write for four magazines at the moment – Play, X•Gen, GamesWorld and Sega XS. That's why they call me the Unstoppable Games Animal. I also write for the Daily Mirror, The Independent, TV Hits... the list goes on, and yes, sometimes I do wish I had a twin brother, but there can be only one!

Last of all, we've made the letters page even bigger this month Gary, four pages, and if people keep writing the number of letters that they are, we may just have to expand it again.

Dear Dave,

Congratulations on producing a great magazine. I'll let you know why I never chose the other PlayStation mags:

The Official PlayStation Magazine – I couldn't find it in any shop so stuff that!

Sony Pro – Hmm, just not enough in it.

PlayStation Plus – A bit crap. No demo disc.

This isn't your usual arse-licking letter. I'm being quite serious. It's well-informed, looks good, top reviews and up-to-date. You asked in your survey, would we rather have a mag with or without a demo CD, well listen. Have you ever seen how many different PC mags there are? Nearly every one comes with a CD. Now, the PSX runs off CD, so I think people expect there to be a demo disc.

But what do I find? Along come four, I repeat FOUR PlayStation mags and only one is going to give us a demo disc.

I commend you greatly on this! So please keep the mag with CD idea. Also, I read you would be reviewing *Alien Trilogy* in time for Christmas. I can't wait as I am a huge fan of Aliens. I would like to see a playable demo of the game with the magazine, and I'm sure others would also.

Cheers!

Damian Clarke

PS. I wouldn't mind winning that PlayStation with 3D Lemmings. Err... am I pushing my luck?

Good letter Damian, as soon as Sony get their house in order you can be sure that we will have the best demo discs in the country.

As for your PS - yes you are!

Dear Dave,

Could you answer these questions?

1. Is it true that Sega are releasing some of the games that Sony have made themselves on the Saturn?
2. Approximately when will *Tekken 2* be released?
3. Are Namco 100% with PlayStation, or will they make games for the Saturn as well?
4. I have *Ridge Racer*, *Tekken*, *Street Fighter: The Movie*, *Rayman* and *WipeOut*. What three games should I get next?
5. Do you have any cheats for *WipeOut*?

6. Why is this the best mag ever?

I desperately need answers for these questions.

Wayne Price

I'll give the old game brain a scratch Wayne, and attempt to answer your questions in order, one at a time:

1. No, I think you've got the wrong end of the stick there Wayne. Most of the games that have appeared early on the PlayStation will also be eligible for release on Saturn, like *Toshinden* for example. Amongst them will be titles like *WipeOut* and *Destruction Derby*, which were originally produced by Psygnosis. The thing is Psygnosis have now become Sony Interactive, so it seems like Sony is producing games for the Saturn, but

*they're not. The Psygnosis games will probably be licensed out to other companies but won't be released on Saturn for at least six months after they appear on PlayStation, just like *Mortal Kombat 3*. Also, games solely produced by Sony themselves, like *Total NBA* will be written as being published by Sony Computer Entertainment (SCE) and won't get anywhere near a Saturn ever. A bit confusing huh? Most of the games for the Sony console are third party and so can be produced for other formats too, although we've heard most firms are developing for PlayStation first then Saturn, if they bother with Saturn at all. However, going the other way you'll never see titles like *Virtua Fighter 2*, *Sega Rally* or *Panzer Dragoon* on the PlayStation. Or will you?*

2. *Tekken 2* is expected to hit the PlayStation in Summer'96, although there is no set date for it's release as yet. Developers Namco do not really want to talk about it until demand for the original *Tekken* has died down.

3. There is no doubting that Namco have been one of the biggest reasons for the PlayStation's success, but their games do not belong exclusively to Sony. In fact, in a recent announcement they made it clear that they would be converting some of their 'arcade hits' to Saturn. Although they wouldn't say which ones. Again though, Saturn owners will have to wait a lot longer than PlayStation owners to play Namco arcade hits.

4. Well, your games collection is looking good so far, but if you want to keep it's quality up you'll have to have a look at three of *Loaded*, *Destruction Derby*, *Lone Soldier*, *Doom*, *Striker '96* and *Mortal Kombat 3*.

5. As for *WipeOut* cheats, shame on you. Here are a couple that will make the game that little bit bigger, not easier.

Access Rapier class

- A) Highlight one player on the startup screen.
- B) Hold down all of the following buttons: L2, R2, Left on the D-Pad, Start and Select.
- C) Keep holding them and press the X button.

Hidden Track

- A) Highlight one player on the startup screen.
- B) Hold down all of the following buttons: L1, R1, Right on the D-Pad, Start, Square and Circle.
- C) While still holding the above press X.

6. Because it is.

PLAY back



What's the matter? Got a pocket full of cash and don't know what to spend it on? At Play we're here to help, advise, and more importantly proclaim which PlayStation titles are worthy of your collection – hence Playback, the definitive buyers' guide and the only one which compares the old with the new as soon as the young pretenders get the champs in their sights.

We tackle head-on the problem of games becoming boring, washed-up, dated or, in the case of *Striker '96*, actually getting better the more you play them.

So, to keep in touch with the times, every month the Play boyz cast their votes on how the games we've previously reviewed fare in comparison to the newer titles. Our verdicts go under the 'Current Score' category... simple eh?

Perhaps the greatest shock this month is the mighty *Striker '96* being toppled from the top of the sports charts by the ground-breaking brilliance of Gremlin Interactive's *Actua Soccer*. We loved it and we're sure that you will too. Other changes include *Criticom* and *Primal Rage* bashing their way into the beat-'em-up category in joint third place, *Agile Warrior* swooping in to steal the flight sim crown, and poor old *Ridge Racer* sinking further down the charts courtesy of its improved sequel.

For easy reference, new entries are marked (-), and any changes to the original scores are highlighted in yellow.

Game	Review Score	Comment	Date of Review	Current Score
Beat-'em-ups				
1. (1) Tekken	95%	Still the best (for now)	Nov '95	95%
2. (2) Mortal Kombat 3	93%	Bloody unbeatable stuff gore fans	Nov '95	93%
3. = (-) Criticom	85%	Take your brain to another dimension	Feb '96	85%
3. = (-) Primal Rage	85%	Plenty of Jurassic japes!	Feb '96	85%
4. (3) New Jap Pro Wrestling	84%	The fat boys done good	Dec '95	84%
5. (4) Battle Arena Toshinden	76%	Great looking stuff for beginners	Nov '95	76%
6. (5) Zero Divide	68%	We've found a free game of <i>Phalanx</i> !	Nov '95	75%
7. (6) WWF Wrestlemania	74%	Competent, if unspectacular, staged boredom	Nov '95	74%
8. (7) Street Fighter: The Movie	85%	It's really beginning to grate	Nov '95	72%
9. (8) Power Instinct 2	52%	Wake up and smell the opposition.	Jan '96	52%
Combat Flight Sims				
1. (-) Agile Warrior	79%	Crash 'n' burn baby!	Feb '96	79%
2. (1) Air Combat	81%	Even a lobotomised tortoise could fly this	Dec '95	78%
3. (2) Ace Combat	79%	<i>Air Combat</i> in Japanese	Nov '95	75%
3D Shooters				
1. (1) Doom	93%	Smooth as silk, more cutting than glass	Jan '96	93%
2. = (-) Krazy Ivan	90%	Die screaming, alien scum!	Feb '96	90%
2. = (2) Lone Soldier	92%	No better than <i>Krazy Ivan</i>	Dec '95	90%
4. = (3) Loaded	85%	Big, bad blasting action	Nov '95	85%
4. = (3) Firestorm: Thunderhawk 2	85%	Fast 'n' frantic airborne action	Jan '96	85%
5. (4) Philosoma	85%	Not as good as Firestorm	Dec '95	84%
6. (5) Assault Rigs	81%	Mass assault or no assault I'm afraid	Jan '96	81%
7. (6) Starblade α	68%	Light cruising on a mono rail	Dec '95	68%
8. (7) Warhawk	65%	Wake me when it's over	Jan '96	65%
9. (8) Kileak The Blood	57%	A weak corridor game	Nov '95	57%
10. (9) Cyber Sled	55%	Best left in the arcades	Nov '95	55%
11. (10) Zeitgeist	51%	Incredibly slow and highly repetitive	Nov '95	51%

Game	Review Score	Comment	Date of Review	Current Score
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Arcade Shooters

1. (1) Shock Wave Assault	87%	It's now got Operation Jumpgate with it	Jan '96	89%
2. (2) Off World Interceptor	77%	Stomach-churning, high-speed mayhem	Dec '95	77%
3. (3) Viewpoint	74%	Harder than a diamond	Dec '95	74%
4. (4) Rapid Reload	71%	Could use a rapid rethink	Nov '95	71%
5. (-) In the Hunt	69%	We've sprung a leak cap'n!	Feb '96	69%
6. = (-) Namco Museum Vol. 1	68%	Just a bit dated!	Feb '96	68%
6. = (5) Total Eclipse Turbo	69%	Totally eclipsed by confusion	Dec '95	68%
7. (6) Raiden Project	68%	A perfect arcade conversion, shame really	Nov '95	67%
8. (7) Twinbee Deluxe Pack	65%	A temporary burst of insanity	Dec '95	65%
9. (8) Novastorm	38%	A definite disappointment	Nov '95	38%

Sports Sims

1. (-) Actua Soccer	94%	Everyone's football fantasy!	Feb '96	94%
2. (1) Striker '96	89%	At last, the mighty one is toppled!	Nov '95	91%
3. (2) NBA Jam: TE	90%	Sorted, speedy sporty sim	Nov '95	90%
4. (3) PGA Tour '96	86%	Course-lacking, bogey-belting bliss	Dec '95	86%
5. (5) Boxer's Road	82%	Great boxing action – eventually	Nov '95	82%
6. (5) FIFA '96	81%	Slow motion replays at their finest.	Jan '96	81%
7. (-) NHL Face Off	78%	NHL '96 without the... er, '96!	Feb '96	78%
8. (-) NFL Game Day	73%	A decent, if unoriginal, gridiron game	Feb '96	73%
9. (6) Goalstorm	69%	One goal wonder	Dec '95	69%
10. (7) J-League Winning Eleven	73%	Goalstorm with Jap teams	Nov '95	66%
11. (8) Ground Stroke Tennis	65%	Good looks, little substance	Nov '95	65%
12. (9) Prime Goal EX	62%	The EX should read Exile	Dec '95	62%
13. (10) Hyper formation Soccer	50%	...and they all fall over	Jan '96	50%
14. (11) King Bowling	37%	Strike it off your shopping list	Dec '95	37%

Strategy/adventure games

1. (1) Defcon 5	88%	Don't throw away the manual	Jan '96	88%
2. (2) Theme Park	86%	More fun than Thorpe Park	Nov '95	86%
3. (-) Alone in the Dark	77%	A disappointing conversion of a classic	Feb '96	77%
4. (3) Discworld	74%	Just don't mention the monkey!	Nov '95	74%
5. (4) 3D Lemmings	69%	Nice idea, but not for me	Nov '95	69%
6. (-) Cyberia	67%	Nice game, shame about the 'play'	Feb '96	67%
7. (5) Hebereke's Popitto	43%	Pop off Hebereke!	Dec '95	43%

Racers

1. (1) Wipeout	94%	Still way up there!	Nov '95	95%
2. (-) Ridge Racer Revolution	93%	Buy it to flaunt it!	Feb '96	93%
3. (2) Ridge Racer	93%	Buy the update... it's better!	Nov '95	90%
4. (3) Destruction Derby	86%	Fun, but durability is a problem	Nov '95	81%
5. (5) Hi Octane	80%	Great fun for one player	Jan '96	80%
6. (4) Twisted Metal	78%	Slams on the brakes too early	Dec '95	78%
7. (5) ESPN Extreme Sports	73%	A rolling geek gathers no cred	Dec '95	73%
8. (6) Cyberspeed	65%	Novel idea, same old story	Dec '95	65%
9. (7) Motor Toon GP	69%	Wild, wacky, but limited	Summer '95	60%

Platformers

1. (1=) Rayman	87%	Broken free of the pack	Nov '95	87%
2. (1=) Jumping Flash	87%	Addictive & surprisingly challenging. Smart!	Nov '95	87%
3. (-) Johnny Bazookatone	85%	Neat 'n' sweet, to a top beat!	Feb '96	85%
4. (2) Herme Hopperhead	53%	Unacceptable fodder	Dec '95	53%

In the indian

With... PWEI

We usually treat computer boffins to our regular curry session, but this month we thought it would make a refreshing change to entertain the alternative music band of the moment, *Pop Will Eat Itself*, writers of Gremlin's *Loaded* soundtrack. So off we all went up to London to discuss fame, fortune, and most importantly, *Loaded*, over a tantalising ring-stinger at Farringdon's famous Raj Tandoori (y'know, the one by the tube station).

Play: How would you define your musical style to outsiders as yet untouched by the *Poppies*?

CM: Hells teeth! A high-speed collision between technology and rock and roll.

Play: We haven't really heard much from the *PWEI* camp in the past couple of years, what have you been up to?

CM: We've been working hard, touring and writing new songs for the current album.

Play: Speaking of which, your most popular album to date is most probably *Cure For Sanity*, which of course spawned the hits *XYZ* and *92°F*. What happened to *PWEI* after that?

CM: We've had two more successful albums – our last was our biggest seller. It was certainly more popular than *Cure for Sanity* in terms of sales and chart position.

Play: At the time of *Cure For Sanity*, you were competing with the likes of *Jesus Jones* and *EMF* for that kind of dance music with guitars twang. Now that both of these bands have fallen on hard times, are you planning a resurrection?

CM: No. That was, like, 1990; five years ago. We've moved on so far since then, not that we particularly thought we were competing with the likes of *Jesus Jones* and *EMF* anyway. Where we're at now, compared to where we were then, is like comparing *Pong* to *Loaded*. It's a bit of a quantum leap.

Play: Right, ahem! How did you get involved with *Loaded*? Did Gremlin approach you or vice versa?

CM: We've been wanting to get into video games for some time now. We were talking to a software company about it three years ago, but nothing came of it. Then, about a year ago now, Gremlin contacted our record company and told us what they wanted to do. And after seven months of cutting through red tape, here we are.

Play: Are you happy with the overall effect?

CM: Yes, it really works well. I was surprised how much it adds to the game.

Play: Are you into video games generally?

CM: We don't get much time to play games unless we're touring. We've got a SNES on our tour bus and we spent a lot of time last year playing *Donkey Kong Country*, which was good. I've played a few games over the years, but the danger is once you start playing them you end up losing hours. Fuzz (*PWEI*'s drummer) sat down to have a quick blast on *Loaded* and spent 12 hours solid playing up to level 11. Mind you, he had it set on 'All enemies are pussies' mode or something!

Play: Is the Sony PlayStation the way forward as far as video game technology goes? Do you really give a toss?

CM: The quality's excellent. I was surprised about how good the graphics are. And some of the visual effects like when Mama lets off his smart bomb are really nice. To be honest with you, though, we haven't had a great deal of experience with games other than *Loaded* on the PlayStation because we broke our machines.

Play: Shame! What do you think has to go into a game for it to be good?

CM: There has to be an excitement factor in there. If you look at some of the games that we've mentioned, from *Space Invaders* onwards, they're all pretty much about not dying, and that tends to get the adrenaline going.

Play: Sony is trying to make the PlayStation cool, and bring the twenty-somethings back into video games. Do you think that the video games industry is cool yet? If not, what do you think of it?

CM: Computer games are definitely getting cooler. I think the image of computers has always been of boffins, but now we're reaching the second, maybe the third generation of kids that have grown up with games, so it's all much more mainstream. And it's all to do with the quality of games now – these days a driving game looks almost real, whereas five years ago it would have looked about as realistic as my arse!

Play: (He's right y'know!) Video games

PLAY 
information

• Name: Clint Mansell
• Job: Spokesperson for a generation
• Fave Curry: Vindaloo
• Fave Game: *Loaded* (obviously!)

were once famously labelled the new rock and roll, so we normally ask the video game developers who usually feature in this column "what's the most rock and roll thing you've ever done" but in your case, what's the most anorak-like thing you've ever done?

CM: Erm... I'm always getting rubbished for doing my video tape labels in the same pen, so that when they're stacked up they look neat, with the same style and handwriting. I've probably ruined my image by answering that question. Perhaps I should have passed.

Play: Too late sucker! Tell us about fame, do you consider yourselves to be famous?

CM: It depends what your idea of fame is. On one hand you've got Eddie 'The Eagle' Edwards, and the other Fred West. Both are famous but not for the reasons I'd like to be. I suppose being famous means you're

somewhere between those two. I'm probably two notches below Eddie 'The Eagle' Edwards.

Play: Do you get recognised in the streets?

CM: It depends what street you're on. I occasionally get recognised by my mum in the High Street.

Play: Does being in *PWE!* get you to the front of the bus queue? Or perhaps preferential treatment down the local tandoori?

CM: No, not really.

Play: Really? Oh sod it then, we might as well give up our rock 'n' roll dreams and stick to getting paid to write about games. However, you must have enjoyed a few of the perks, list the following in order of importance - cash, cars, football, video games, music, sex.

CM: Well, I just think cash, cash, cash, cash, cash, cash because you can have all the others if you've got that.

Play: Stranded on a Desert Island time, only this one's got its own car testing circuit. Pick the most desirable combination to have of car, partner, video game and games machine, and of course, tunes.

CM: What kind of Desert Island is this? Am I supposed to say something like Pamela Anderson at this point? I dunno about car, obviously I'd have *Loaded* as my game, and I'd be listening to *The Prodigy*.

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Thanks to: Mrs McKeivitt's husband, Cathy, Glenn and Sean at Bullfrog, Andy, Matt and Sean at Mirage, Interplay, Lisa Foster, Stu Dinsey and Sharon so they still like the mag. The Bournemouth Video Games Centre (Tel: 01202 527314). No thanks to: The Brazil Club for throwing Chris, Colin, Rich, Shazza, Steve and Mallo out just because of a few self-pulled pints and broken chairs. Striking French holiday workers.

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Subs/Mail Order
Tel: 01202 200200
Fax: 01202 299955
Subscription Rates
Annual Rate (12 issues)
UK: £27.00
Europe: £45.00
Rest of World: £63.00

Mail Address
Play
Paragon Publishing Ltd
Paragon House, St Peter's Road
Bournemouth, BH1 2JS
Phone: 01202 299900
Fax: 01202 299955

Printed by
Dunoon Web Offset, Maidstone

Distributed by
Seymour International Press
Distributions
Windsor House, 1270 London Road,
Norbury, London, SW16 4DH
Tel: 0181 6798999

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Play ISSN 1358-0474



Played Out...

What an issue eh? No doubt about it, it looks as if 1996 will be the year of the PlayStation. Here at *Play* we certainly seem to be seeing less and less duff, rushed products, released to try and cash in on the PlayStation's mightily successful launch and more and more properly-developed, exciting titles.

Obviously though, the games industry hasn't yet reached the point where it can be trusted to release consistently good product – which is good news for games reviewers, as if it ever does, we're out of a job.

Still, here's looking forward to a year which should see the arrival of our demo CD, *Hexen*, *Quake*, *Tekken 2*, *Soul Edge*, *Time Crisis*, *PAL Ridge Racer Revolution*, *Rave Racer*, *Resident Evil*, *Street Fighter Alpha*, *Magic Carpet*, *X-Men*, *Wing Commander IV*, *Syndicate Wars*, *Impact Racing*, *G-Police*, *Street Racer*, *Rise of the Robots 2*, *Rock 'n' Roll Racing II*, *Tilt*, *Z*, *Earthworm Jim 2*, *Have A Nice Day* and a few others we're keeping mum about test 'rival' mags catch on. Cheers.

Play Compo Winners!

We've had a huge response to our competitions and have now finally sifted through the entries and chosen the winners. Thanks to everybody who entered, and to those whose names are printed here, consider yourselves very lucky...

Wipeout CD Competition Winners
The following twenty people each win a copy of the *Wipeout* CD
David Owens, Northampton
Mr P Southwell, Stockport
Mr Cole, Southsea

Stewart Rollinson, Tipton
Nigel Lumley, Rowdon
Mr G Skeavington, Mansfield
A Maddison, Shirley
David Boyer, Canton
Ian Chiles, Forest Hill
Mark Lawton, Hanley
Mark Beauchamp, Reading
Kevin Anderson, Harrogate
Paul Davies, Luton
Stephen Paul, Co. Londonderry
James Marsden, Nailworth
Mr A Egan, Wellingborough
Gary Sharp, Banff
Mr S Williams, Harrow
Andrew Wilson, Seaham
John Packham, Peterlee

This lucky geezer has won a Sony PlayStation and a copy of *Striker '96*:
Simon Nugent, Anfield

These guys all win a copy of the smart footie game, *Striker '96*:
Robert E Cloake, Sinfen
Mr Steven Beech, Longton
Jason Roberts, Whetstone
Kevin Pollard, Salendine Rock

Nice one folks – your prizes should be with you soon.



You should see PAL versions of *Ridge Racer Revolution* by Easter and of *Soul Edge* later on. Maybe not 'til Xmas though.

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